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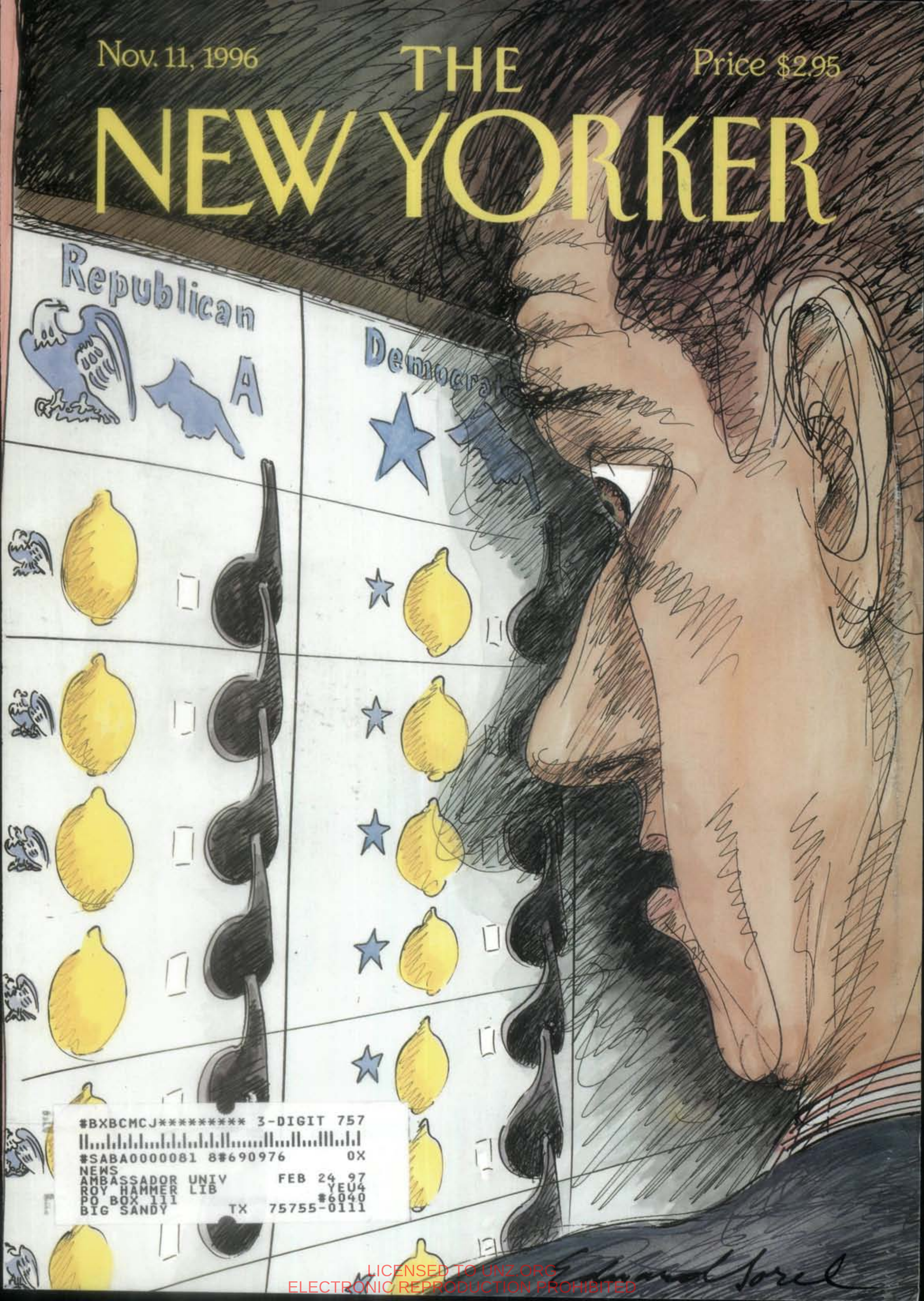
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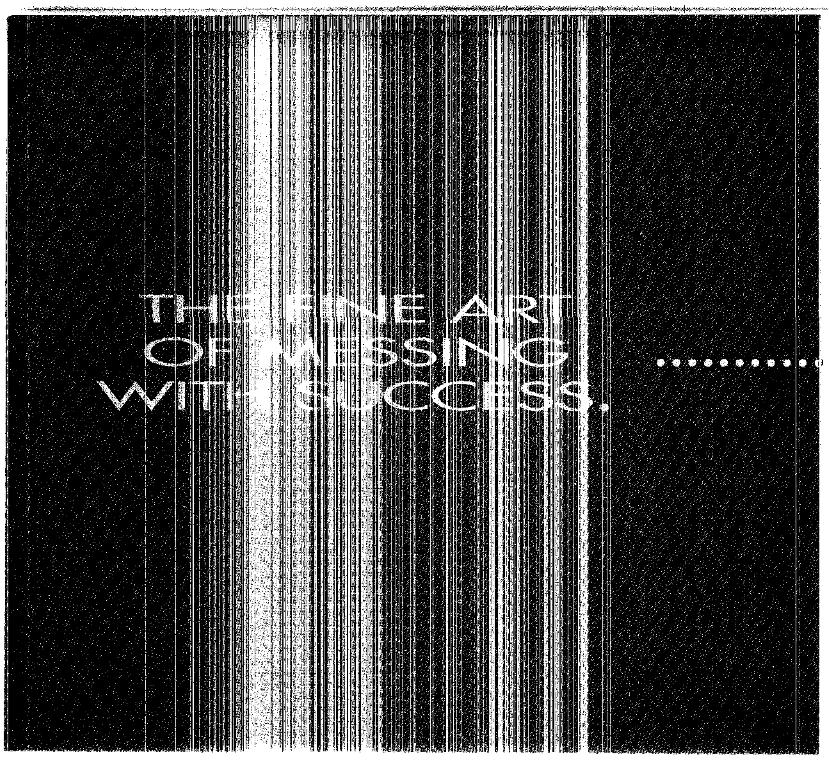

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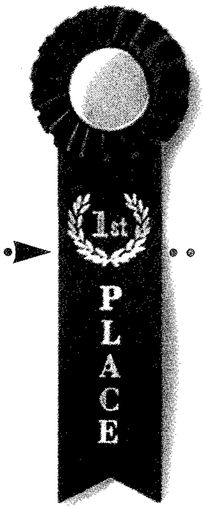
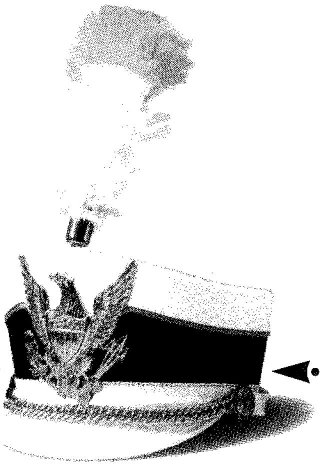
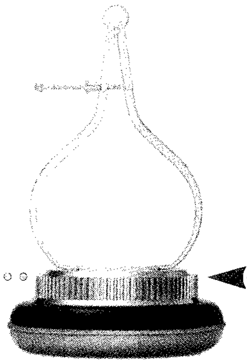


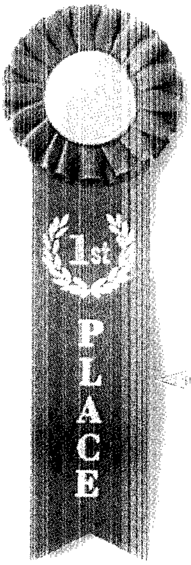
*February 26, 1992:
Chrysler minivans are
named top safety choice
in the passenger van
category in Prevention
magazine's Safe Car
of the Year Awards.*



*October 11, 1995:
Accompanied by the
Whetstone HS Marching
Band, Chrysler CEO Bob
Eaton delivers the
five-millionth Chrysler
Corporation minivan to
the Lombard family of
Columbus, Ohio.*



*November 1, 1995:
New Dodge Caravan is
named Motor Trend's
Car of the Year—first time
a minivan wins the award.
Second straight year that
a Chrysler Corporation
vehicle has won.*



*August 1, 1996:
Chrysler Town & Country
minivan named top
safety choice in the 1995
passenger van category
by Prevention magazine.
(Anyone see a pattern
developing here?)*

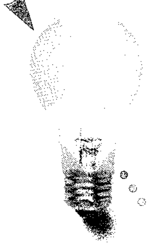
Having invented the category, we at Chrysler Corporation knew that tampering with something as popular as our minivan would be a delicate operation. (Of course, introducing it in the first place was a bit chanc too.) But what we finally decided was that the great risk was resting on our laurels. When making great ca

*Visit our World Wide Web site at http://www.chryslercorp.com, or call toll-free 1-888-GREATCARS.* *Chrysler minivan owner loyalty at 63% in compilation of 62,583 new car a light truck buyers conducted during the '92 second-quarter (January, February, March) sales period. †Always wear your seat belt.

*May 15, 1992:*
*Multidisciplinary platform team convenes to begin work on the next generation of the minivan.*

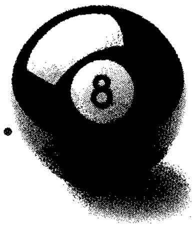
*August 1, 1992:*
*Dodge and Plymouth minivans get optional sport handling suspension. Car pools across America become approximately 37% less boring.*

*September 18, 1992:*
*Consumer Attitude Research announces that Chrysler minivans have the highest repeat purchase rate of any platform sold in the United States.**

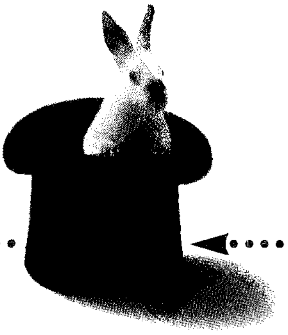


*July 15, 1992:*
*Platform team reads letters from minivan owners asking, "Why not put a sliding door on the driver's side too?"*

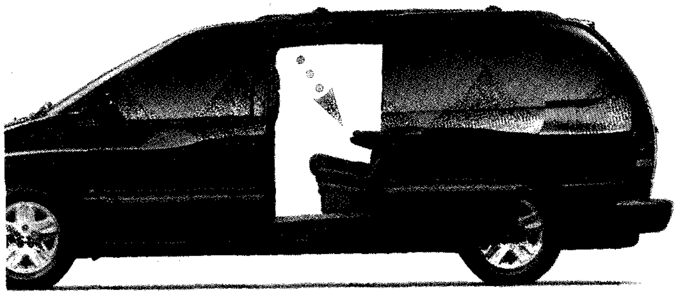
*May 9, 1993:*
*Sales of Chrysler minivans in Asia pass 2,000. Reports that minivan interior is more spacious than average Beijing apartment are unconfirmed.*



*September 15, 1993:*
*Problem: How to keep driver's-side sliding door from banging into fuel door.*



*April 18, 1994:*
*Fuel-door problem solved. (Sorry, but if we told you how, we'd have to kill you.)*



*March 10, 1995:*
*Redesigned Chrysler, Plymouth, and Dodge minivans reach dealerships with features including dual front air bags,† optional dual sliding doors, Easy Out Roller Seats,™ and enough storage space for the most acquisitive of families.*

nd trucks is your goal, the right decision is usually
irly obvious. Kind of like the idea of putting a sliding
oor on both sides of your minivan, come to think of it.

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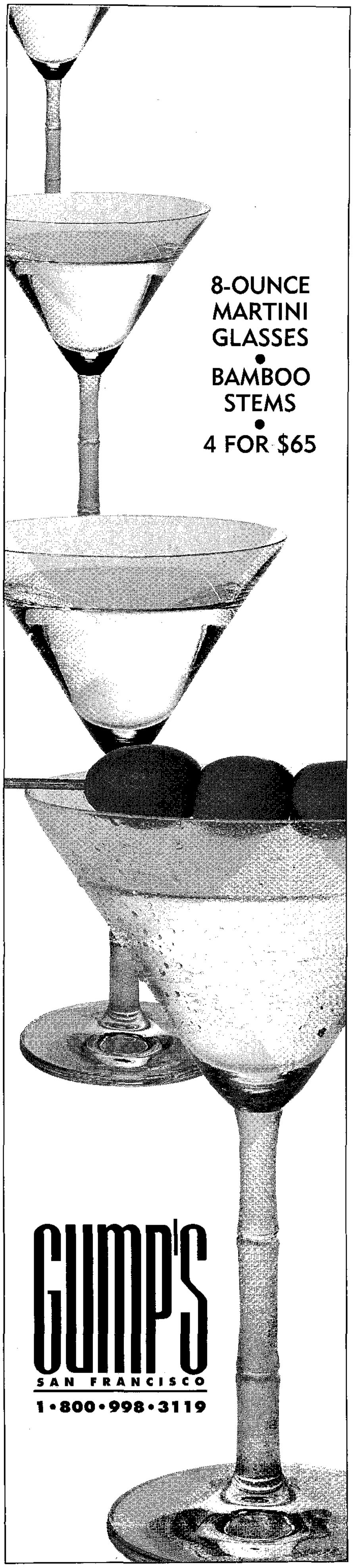

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NOVEMBER 11, 1996

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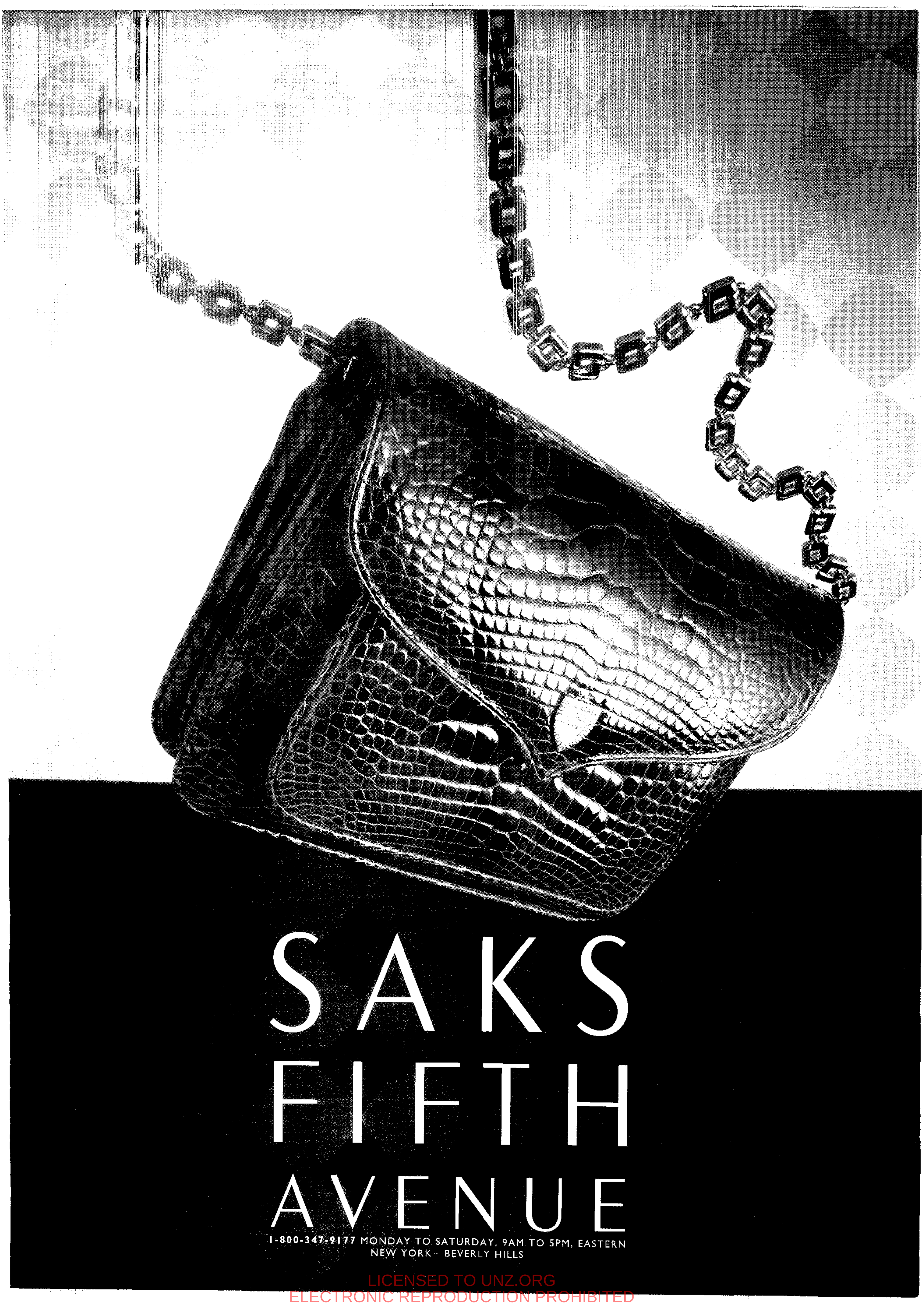

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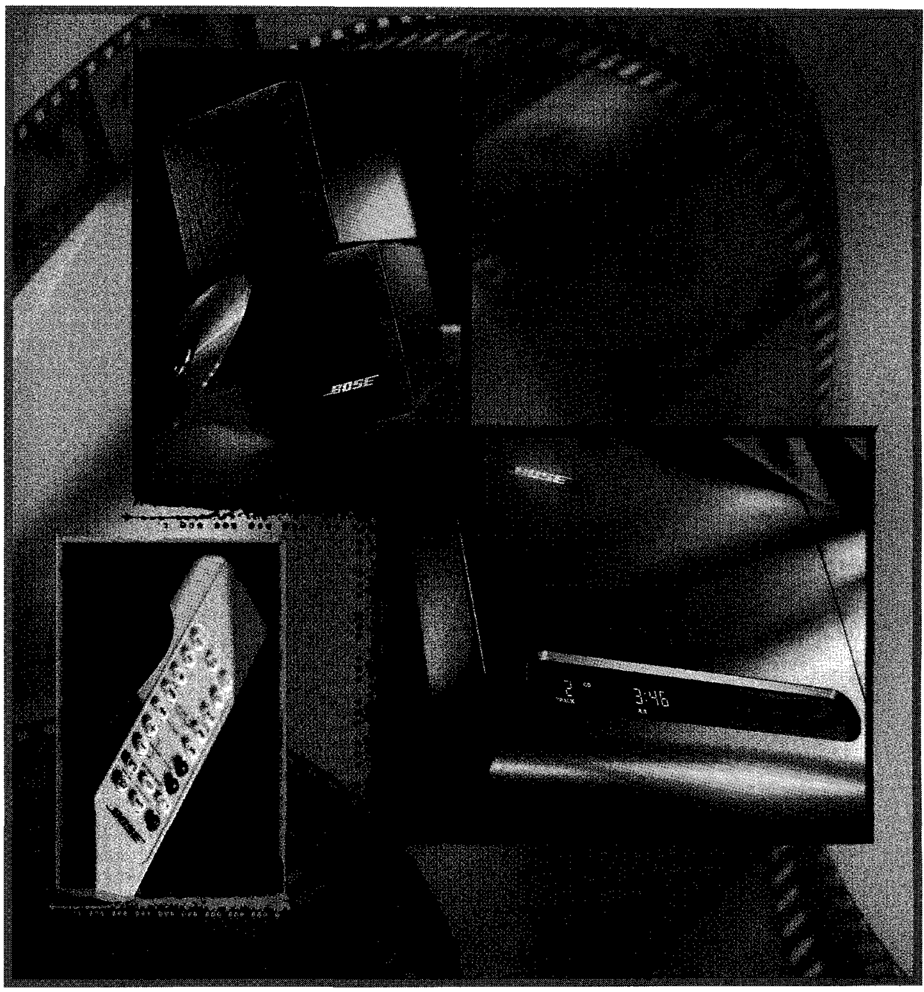

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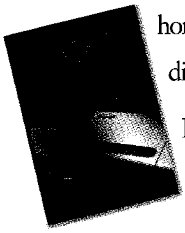

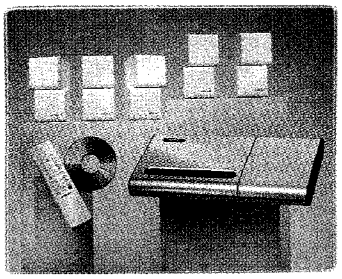

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# COMMENT

## FANS ♥ YANKS

*World-class bliss is great—for a while.*

THE weather for last week's ticker-tape parade, celebrating the Yankees' unexpected World Championship and even more unlikely emergence as national sweetie pies, was perfect: deep blue skies; a tingly, post-baseball snap to the air; a midday blizzard downtown. With the crime rate down, the Dow Jones over six thousand, Frank Torre's new heart thumping away, and Jeff Maier supplanting Madonna's baby as Junior Icon, everything has been getting so nice in New York that it feels like Topeka around here. Winning big isn't exactly new for the Apple, to be sure: with nine major-sport franchises in the local loop, these championship celebrations (for the New Jersey Devils last year, for the Rangers in 1994, for the football Giants in 1991) should no longer take us by surprise. What was different about the three-million turnout last Tuesday was the makeup of this particular Yankee team, each of its members now waving and beaming from those raised floats that have replaced Grover Whalen's shiny black touring cars, and the look on the faces of their surging, Macarena-writhing, jumping-in-the-air fans. Out of uniform now, the passing heroes—Derek Jeter in black leather and killer shades, Cecil Fielder with a video camera and a fat cigar, Wade Boggs in a fetching, perhaps faux, squirrel coat—looked younger than they ever did in the on-deck circle; most of all, they looked relieved. Never mind triumph—this was about happiness.

For late-season watchers, baseball's clock-free, pitch-by-pitch disclosures and its fondness for startling changes of mood and theme from one game to the next (the Yankees' 8-6 comeback from a six-run deficit in the fourth Series game took four hours and seventeen minutes; the next night's edgy, masterly 1-0 shutout by Andy Pettitte was over almost before the eleven-o'clock news) accumulate a complexity of emotion and possibility that is probably beyond the reach of other sports. Luck and skill (and boredom) show their faces by turns, and impending disaster, frustrated hopes, renewed anxiety, and recurrent sudden release can contribute to an almost insupportable sense of strain. Baseball feels like life sometimes, and when, contrary to experience, all goes well out there—remember Charlie Hayes's tiny roller

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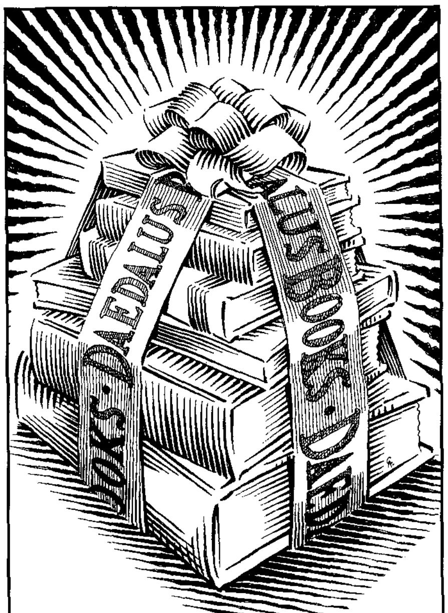

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Bernard Schoenbaum

that stayed fair down the third-base line; remember Paul O'Neill gimpily sprinting after and then catching up to that deep drive for a last out—we feel an end-of-the-day sort of satisfaction that is deeper than any "We're Number One!" exultation. Next morning, when the game comes flooding back to mind, the unlikelihood of it is what makes us smile.

These 1996 Yankees are nothing like the 1986 Mets—the Keith Hernandez, Gary Carter, Lenny Dykstra, Wally Backman champions, whose on-the-field high-fiving, off-the-field carousing, and coolly sophisticated maneuverings of the media made them hated in the heartland, even after they captured the amazing Sixth Game and went on to confirm the Red Sox' worst fears about themselves. What we felt for them here in town was a raging ironic pride. This is New York, America, and up yours. What we feel now is that we're Jimmy Stewart. We want to go out and hug somebody, preferably another relative or friend of Joe Torre's. If the Bronxian postseason looked more and more like a Capra script as it wound down, the manager was Oscar-worthy character-role casting. Saturnine, worn, and baggy-faced, with those water-spaniel eyes and candy-stained lips, this Brooklyn-born Joe was a dad for all seasons. The engaging diversity of his players was movielike as well: a tall, shy, classical-guitar-playing star center fielder in Bernie Williams; the cheerfully self-assured rookie shortstop Derek Jeter; the slick-smooth, late-flame-throwing Mariano Rivera; the Roman-beaked lefty ace Andy Pettitte; the surgically restored, palely staring David Cone; the gentle, bus-size slugger Cecil Fielder; and so on. Darryl Strawberry and Doc Gooden had been celebrity Mets a decade ago. Here, with the Yankees, they were less and also more: diminished heroes now in recovery, with a grateful look about them for the chance of each new day. Paul O'Neill, Jim Leyritz, John Wetteland, Tino Martinez, Mariano Duncan, and Wade Boggs were highly paid, robust veterans, alike in their resolute skills and absence of pout. What these players and the other Yankees held in common was open respect for their manager, and that, too, feels scripted and old-style in 1996. Even the owner was different this time around—less Georgian, for a change; almost deblustered.

None of this will last long. Next year's Yankees will be even richer, and they will grow wary of the insatiable media swarm that feeds on champions. Some of the young Yanks will become more familiar to us in TV commercials, where the qualities that made them feel so fresh will be morphed into sentimentality or worn to parody by endless repetition. Some of their old teammates will be playing elsewhere. Once the season starts, the games will be harder and less fun, with the burden of repeating almost visible above the field with every pitch, every play. We Yankee fans will be more critical, now that we know what to expect, and when our guys fall on their faces out there, as all ballplayers do, we'll boo. Fans around the country will feel free to begin hating the Yankees once again. Maybe this won't be such a bad thing. Do we in New York want to go around looking like a bunch of wimpy smilers and huggers for a whole *year*? Do we want to be happy every day? Naah.

—ROGER ANGELL

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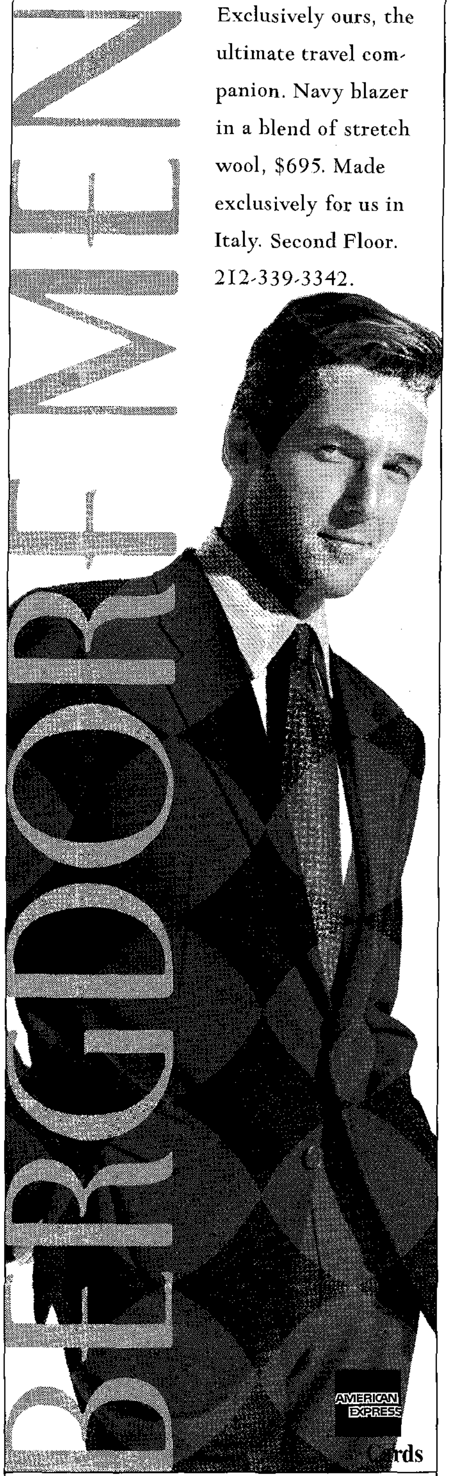

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# IN THE MAIL

## UP WITH COMPASSION

Ellen Willis's "Down with Compassion" (Comment, September 30th) condemns and ridicules Call to Renewal. But had she attended our September convention, she would have seen that we were offering far more than "moral lectures." We did say that Bill Clinton's decision to sign the welfare bill was a moral failure, but we also called for real welfare reform. We offered concrete ideas for empowering the poor, and discussed the "deeper, harder issues" Willis claims we ignored, such as the effects of downsizing and the leverage corporation money has over the political process. I'm now on a thirty-city tour and have discovered that people hunger for a new politics, beyond left and right. It seems that what Willis really has a problem with is the involvement of people of faith, whether the religious right or more progressive voices, in building new social movements—a view that would disappoint a compassionate moralist like Martin Luther King, Jr., as much as it does us.

JIM WALLIS
Call to Renewal, Washington, D.C.

When I was ten years old, in 1944, I stood in the rain and watched from the Grand Concourse in the Bronx as Franklin Roosevelt's election campaign passed through the Italian and Jewish immigrant areas. Depression families all, these immigrants often had their lives rescued by New Deal programs. It was thanks to such benefits that I was able to go to college and then to law school.

Years later, I argued the first welfare case decided in the United States Supreme Court. The Court's unanimous opinion recognized that if the federal government did not take care of people—white and black, old and young, male and female—the states certainly wouldn't. All the research I did for that case, and for the dozens of other cases my colleagues and I filed throughout the country, tells me that nearly everything the Clinton Administration and its supporters are saying about who the disadvantaged are, how they got that way, and what can be done about them is false. The devastation of the lives of the poor solely because of Clinton's opportunism is, I say without excessive naïveté, unique in American political life.

MARTIN GARBUS
New York City

## THE PHARMACOPOEIA OF YOUTH

I was surprised by Malcolm Gladwell's article on aging ("The New Age of Man," September 30th), in which he wrote about Michael Rose's work at some length and gently dismissed me as a romantic who loves her work but wouldn't really mind if nothing comes of it. It's true that I'm motivated by curiosity as well as by altruism—that's the beauty of basic research—but Gladwell may have put his money on the wrong horse.

I have chosen to approach the mystery of aging by studying animals that differ drastically from normal. (Similarly, the study of dwarfs has told us how the human-growth hormone works.) My colleagues and I have identified mutant roundworms that differ from normal ones by a single gene and are still active and youthful at an age when normal worms are either decrepit or dead. It's too soon to know whether the same genes control aging in human beings. They may; these worms share many other important genes with us. If so, someday we may have a single pill for youthfulness—not many pills, as Rose's studies forecast.

CYNTHIA KENYON
Dept. of Biochemistry and Biophysics
University of California, San Francisco

*Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "In the Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.*

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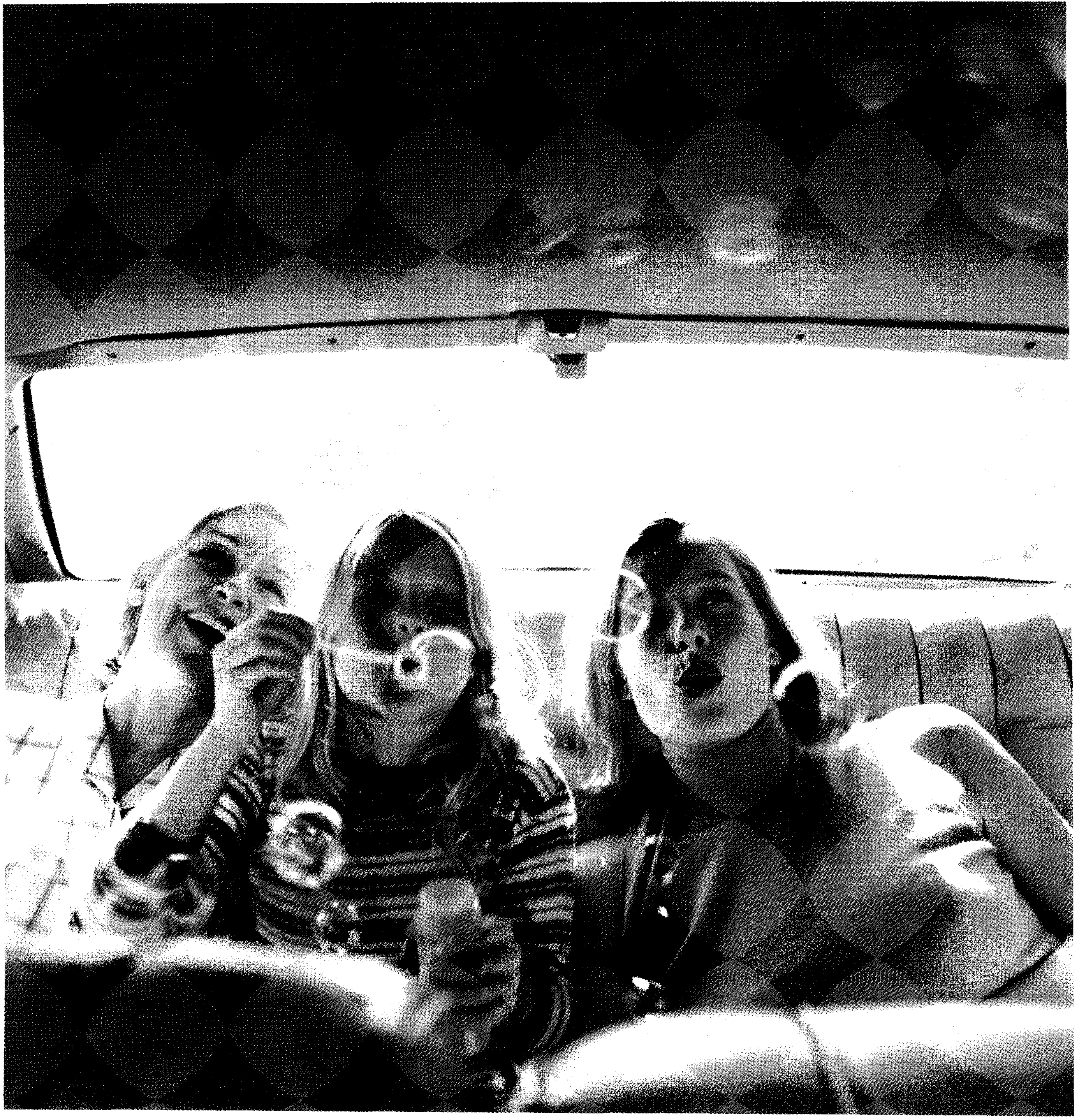

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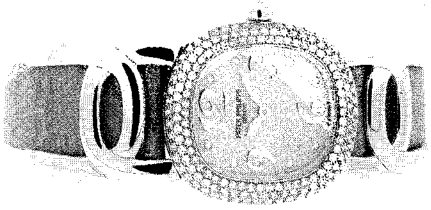
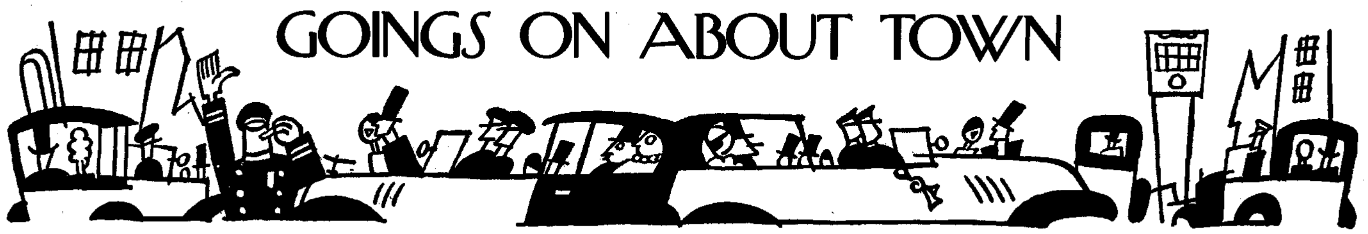


# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



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| 10 | 11 | 12 |  |  |  |  |

## THE THEATRE

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*(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)*

**A Brief History of White Music**—A comic revue by Dee Dee Thomas and David Tweedy, in which an all-black cast—Wendy Edmead, Deborah Keeling, and James Alexander—interprets the music of Sonny and Cher, the Beach Boys, the Beatles, and other honkies. In previews. (Village Gate, 240 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

**Cakewalk**—Linda Lavin has the lead opposite Michael Knight in Peter Feibleman's autobiographical drama about his relationship with Lillian Hellman. Directed by Marshall Mason, with music by Carly Simon. Opens Nov. 6 at 6:30. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

**Chicago**—John Kander and Fred Ebb's 1975 musical version of Maureen Dallas Watkins's 1926 play, starring Bebe Neuwirth, Ann Reinking, Joel Grey, and James Naughton. Directed by Walter Bobbie. In previews. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

**Demonology**—Marisa Tomei and Rocco Sisto star in Kelly Stuart's new comedy, set in the future, about sabotage at a baby-formula plant. Directed by Jim Simpson. In previews through the Nov. 10 matinée. Opens that evening at 7 and runs through Nov. 17. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

**Family Values**—A podiatrist (Joel Fabiani) has second thoughts after he dumps his wife (Ellen Evans) for a younger woman, in a comedy by the Canadian playwright Carl Ritchie. In previews through Nov. 7. Opens Nov. 8 at 8. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 358-5174.)

**God Said, "Ha!"**—In her new one-woman show, the comic Julia Sweeney gives an account of the year her life seemed too good to be true—because it was. Previews begin Nov. 7. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**Golden Child**—The latest from the pen of David Henry Hwang, a drama set in China in 1918. Directed by James Lapine. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

**It's a Slippery Slope**—Spalding Gray has learned to ski, and he tells all about it in his new monologue, on Sundays and Mondays at the Vivian Beaumont. Opens Nov. 10 at 7:30. (Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

**Juan Darién: A Carnival Mass**—Julie Taymor and Elliot Goldenthal's 1988 play, based on a mystical short story by the Uruguayan author Horacio Quirogà, incorporates music, puppetry, masks, and dance. Directed by Ms. Taymor. In previews. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

**Nine Armenians**—Leslie Ayvazian's new work, a multigenerational family drama, was inspired by memories of her immigrant-scholar grandfather. With Kathleen Chalfant, Michael Countryman, and Sophie Hayden. Directed by Lynne Meadow. In previews through Nov. 10. Opens Nov. 12 at 6:45. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

**1969 Terminal 1996**—Joseph Chaikin and Susan Yankowitz have reworked their 1969 exploration of mortality and death, which was originally staged by the Open Theatre. Nov. 6-7 and Nov. 10 at 8:30 and Nov. 8-9 at 8:30 and 10:30. Through Nov. 17 (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

**Present Laughter**—Frank Langella portrays the matinée idol Garry Essendine in Noël Coward's 1946 comedy. Directed by Scott Elliot. In previews. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

**The Queen of Bingo**—A new comedy by Jeanne Michels and Phyllis Murphy, about a Friday night in the life of two middle-aged sisters who are inveterate low-stakes gamblers. In previews through the Nov. 10 matinée. Opens that evening at 5. (Greenwich House Theatre, 27 Barrow St. 239-6200.)

**The Red Devil Battery Sign**—Elizabeth Ashley and James Victor star in Tennessee Williams's 1975 drama, set in Dallas after the assassination of President Kennedy. In previews. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

**The Rehearsal**—The Roundabout Theatre Company presents Roger Rees, David Threlfall, and Frances Conroy in Jeremy Sams's new translation of Jean Anouilh's 1963 drama. Directed by Nicholas Martin. In previews. (Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

**The Santaland Diaries**—Two one-acts, adapted by Joe Mantello from David Sedaris's book of stories, "Barrel Fever." Starring Karen Valentine and Timothy Olyphant, with costumes by Isaac Mizrahi. Directed by Mr. Mantello. Preview on Nov. 6. Opens Nov. 7 at 8. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

**Signature Theatre Company**—The troupe's Sam Shepard season has begun with a pair of one-acts: "When the World Was Green (A Chef's Fable)," co-written with Joseph Chaikin, and "Chicago." Mr. Chaikin is the director. Preview on Nov. 6. Opens Nov. 7 at 8. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200.)

*"The Importance of Being Earnest," at the Irish Rep.*

CHRIS CURRY

**A Soldier's Play**—Charles Fuller's 1982 drama, about a murder on a Southern military base during the Second World War. Presented by the Valiant Theatre Company, under the direction of Clinton Turner Davis. Previews begin Nov. 12. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

**Tomorrowland**—New Georges presents a new play by Neena Beber, a dark comedy about a woman who leaves academe for a job on a children's television show in Orlando. In previews through Nov. 7. Opens Nov. 8 at 8. (46 Walker Street Theatre, 46 Walker St. 560-7387.)

### OPENED RECENTLY

**Americana**—A revue surveying the evolution of the nation's music since the eighteen-nineties. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

**The Blues Are Running**—Michael Cristofer's new play, in which mistaken identity results in murder, revolves around the intertwined circumstances of three unacquainted couples. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

**Born to Sing!**—This sequel to the long-running gospel musical "Mama, I Want to Sing!" has a negligible plot and some second-rate acting, but the point is the music, and the music is glorious. You couldn't find a better introduction to gospel without going to church. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 505-0700.)

**Chimère**—The French company Zingaro—seventeen riders, acrobats, and dancers, a twelve-member band, and twenty-seven horses—overwhelms its audience with passionate, sensual images. This is art for art's sake, without any particular plot, but the combination of astonishing equestrianism and richly colored, Indian-inspired music, dance, and costumes is exquisite. (The big top at Battery Park City. For more information, call 718-636-4100. Closes Nov. 10.)

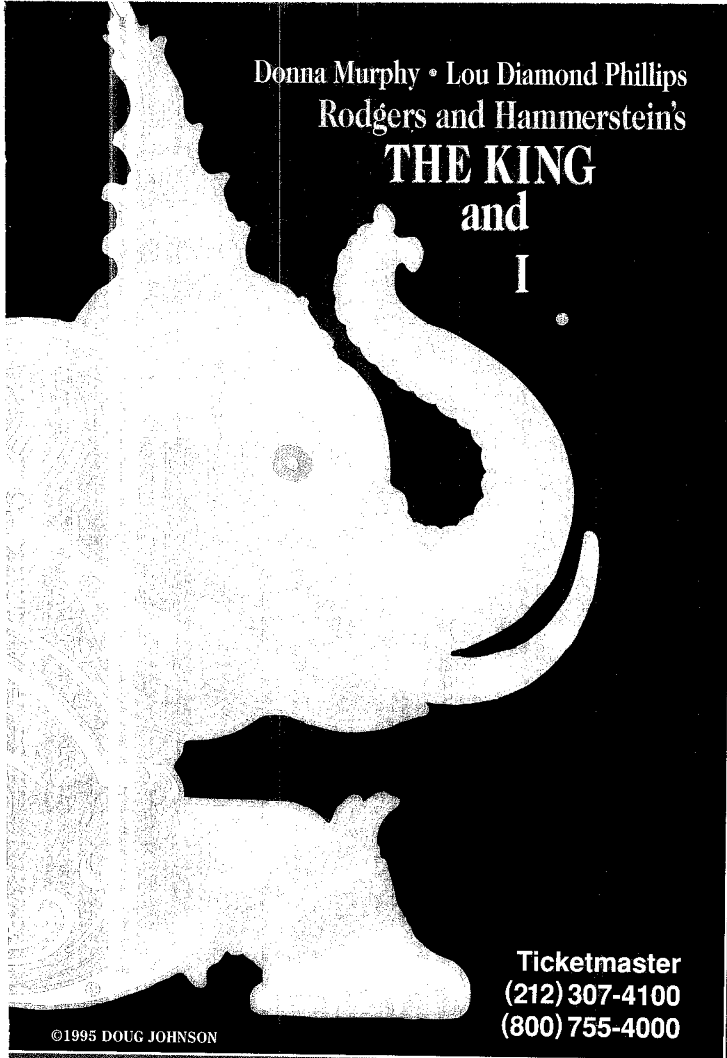
**The Cocoanuts**—The American Jewish Theatre's revival of the Irving Berlin–George S. Kaufman musical that starred the Marx Brothers in 1925. The songs are pleasant enough, but it's the laugh-out-loud comedy that really scores. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

**Cymbeline**—Shakespeare's late play unreels like a Movie of the Week: it has young love misunderstood, a lady wronged, a kidnapping, political intrigue, and a happy ending, all put together with tricks the playwright recycled from earlier, better works—a potion that mimics death, women dressed up as boys, mistaken identities. Familiar as all this stuff is, the Pearl Theatre Company's production is great fun, and Kathleen McNenny, as the wronged lady, and John Wylie (a Pearl stalwart), as her aged servant, are charming enough to make it matter. Directed, with an appropriate emphasis on humor, by Shepard Sobel. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

**Einstein: A Stage Portrait**—John Crowther portrays the fluffy-haired physicist, in a new play by Willard Simms. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-6322. Closes Nov. 10.)

**Fit to Be Tied**—Nicky Silver's new comedy could have used some serious trimming before it was sent out on the runway: it's a rather baggy affair, despite director David Warren's clean and clever production. Silver doesn't seem to be in full control of his tone this time; he mixes farce with sentimentality, which is about as winning a combination as hair and chewing gum. T. Scott Cunningham plays a rich, loveless young man who tricks a beautiful boy into staying with him, and Jean Smart plays his ditzy mother and secret co-conspirator. Even when Silver isn't at his best, there are bits of brilliance, and Smart delivers some hilarious riffs with a hard, bright polish. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/4/96.) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Nov. 10.)

**Forbidden Broadway Strikes Back!**—Gerard Alessandrini cuts a satirical swath through the Great White Way in a new edition of his musical parody. (Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599.)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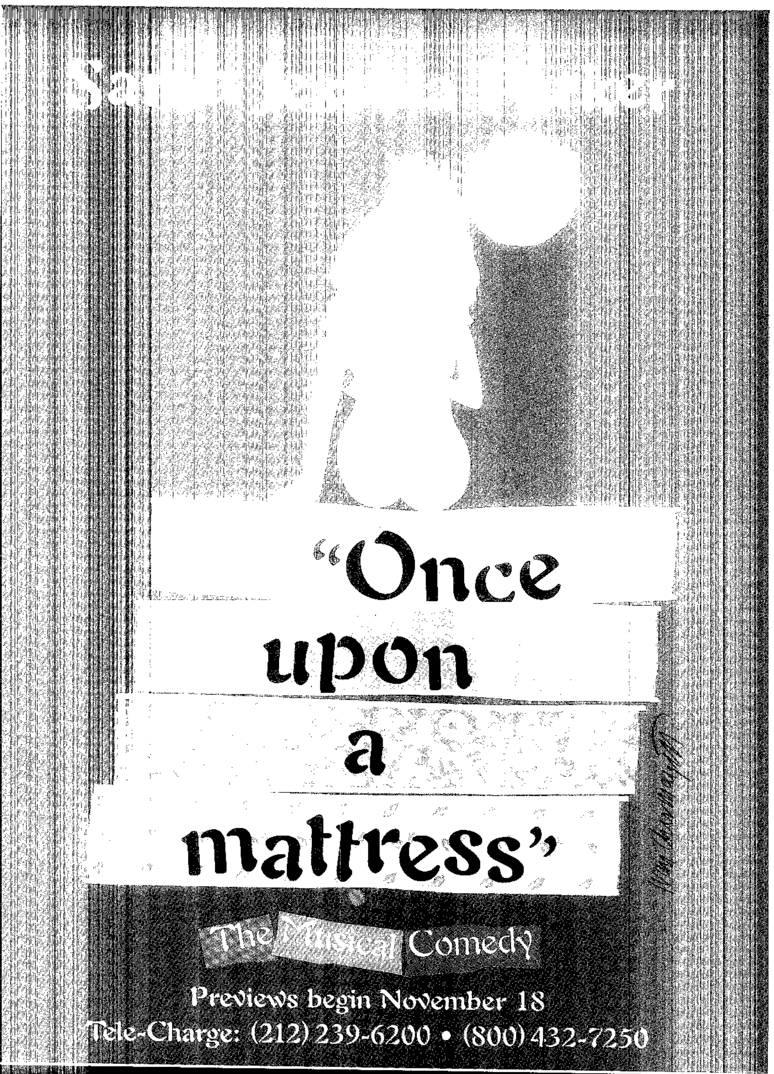
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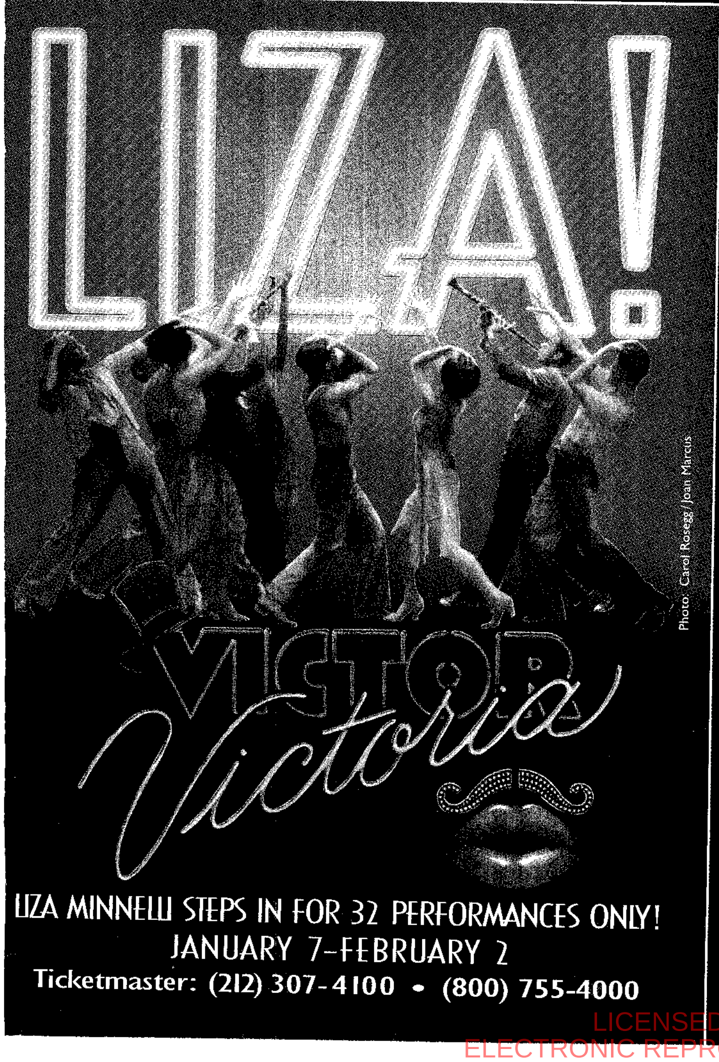
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TITANIC

A New Musical

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**Full Gallop**—The legendary, vividly eccentric fashion editor Diana Vreeland is the subject of Mary Louise Wilson and Mark Hampton's one-woman play, in which Wilson stars. Set in 1971, shortly after Vreeland was fired from *Vogue*, it's rich and resonant, with much to say about life that's worth hearing. A thoroughly satisfying evening in the theatre—very funny and very moving. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.)

**Go Go Go**—Juliana Francis performs a multimedia one-woman show about the relationship between sexual abuse and the sex industry. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

**Grace & Glorie**—Tom Ziegler's predictable but charmingly told tale of an illiterate Virginia mountain woman, played by Estelle Parsons, and the Harvard M.B.A. who befriends her in her last days. Under Gloria Muzio's direction, Parsons makes the blend of humor and pathos affecting rather than—as it might easily have been—cloying. (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 719-9393. Closes Nov. 24.)

**The Gravity of Means**—A new comedy by John Kolvenbach, on the subject of friendship. (MCC Theatre, 120 W. 28th St. 727-7765.)

**The Heather Woodbury Report; or, What Ever**—The performance artist presents one episode of her one-woman, hundred-odd-character serial comedy every Wednesday through Dec. 18. (Surf Reality, 172 Allen St., between Stanton and Rivington Sts. 673-4182.)

**Howard Crabtree's When Pigs Fly**—The exuberant designer Howard Crabtree died in June, and this revue of witty, satiric songs (created with and written and directed by Mark Waldrop, and sung by a talented cast dressed in Crabtree's sequinned, feathered, mind-boggling costumes) is a fitting cap to his career. The songs purport to be parts of a larger show that keeps falling apart, leaving Howard (played by Michael West) wondering whether he should have become a chicken farmer. Clearly, chicken farming's loss was our gain. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

**I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change**—In made-for-musical-theatre voices, the appealing cast of Joe DiPietro and Jimmy Roberts's crowd-pleasing revue about love and marriage sings songs examining made-for-musical-theatre issues. Couples in the audience may nudge each other happily as they guess the actors' lines before they're uttered. Directed by Joel Bishoff. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.)

**The Importance of Being Earnest**—This very pleasing and intimate production of Oscar Wilde's nonpareil comedy marks the designer Tony Walton's New York directorial début, and he has assembled an excellent cast for the occasion. First and foremost, there is Nancy Marchand as that glowering goddess Lady Bracknell; not far behind her are Eric Stoltz, Daniel Gerroll, Melissa Errico, Thomas Carson, Sloane Shelton, Schuyler Grant, and John Fiedler. An Irish Repertory Theatre production. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

**The Innocence of Ghosts**—Spirits lead a woman to a Chinese acupuncture clinic, in a drama by Rosanna Staffa. Presented by the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660. Closes Nov. 9.)

**Joe Turner's Come and Gone**—August Wilson's powerful play, set among African-Americans in a Pittsburgh boarding house in 1911—a time when what it meant to be free and black in America was unclear—is about ties that bind and ties that are sundered, by blacks themselves and by racist whites. The play shows how an intimate, supportive group is shaken by betrayal and violence but sustained by several different kinds of faith. Arthur French, as a mojo man, and Mike Hodge and Peggy Alston, as the respectable boarding-house owners, all stake their turf compellingly; Wilson's achievement lies as much in showing how their competing visions can be reconciled as it does in demonstrating how the violence done to their little community can be withstood. The rest of the cast is also riveting, and Clinton Turner Davis's direction is both clear and funny. The New Federal Theatre Company produced. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 353-1176. Closes Nov. 17.)

**Joseph Gabriel: Magic on Broadway**—Mr. Gabriel has performed at the Las Vegas Flamingo Hilton for the past ten years, and his feats are certainly impressive: making his assistant's torso disappear; pulling a parrot from inside an egg hidden inside a lemon hidden inside a grapefruit; conjuring up a Checker cab onstage. But it's all too clear from the trappings of his act—dancers in polka-dotted boxer shorts, a sequinned Elvis—that he hasn't left Nevada behind. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

**Late Nite Catechism**—As Vicki Quade and Maripat Donovan point out in their program notes, many of the stories in their satire of Catholic-school education come from their own memories—another instance of truth's being not only stranger than fiction but funnier, too. Donovan, whose face seems to hold as many expressions as the Bible has parables, offers a commanding performance as the lone nun in charge of an adult catechism class, and the audience brings as much to the performance as the script does. It's hard to keep from laughing whether you're a believer or not, though you may face a reprimand or two in the process. (St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

**The Maiden of Ludmir**—The Folksbiene Playhouse presents a new Yiddish musical by Miriam Hoffman (book and lyrics) and John Clifton (music), based on the life of the nineteenth-century female Torah scholar. (Simultaneous English or Russian translation is available.) (123 E. 55th St. 755-2231.)

**Matty: An Evening with Christy Mathewson**—Between 1911 and 1913, baseball great Christy Mathewson led the New York Giants to three pennant victories, becoming something like the Michael Jordan of his day. He also did quite a bit of writing, which Eddie Frierson has turned into a one-man show. Frierson exhibits plenty of energy (there's no shortage of yelling) in relating tales of such characters as manager John McGraw and Charley (Giant Jinx Killer) Faust. Unfortunately, he never fails to include the moral of a story. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

**Missing/Kissing**—A double bill of new comedies written and directed by John Patrick Shanley: "Missing Marisa," about two men who've been jilted by the same woman, and "Kissing Christine," about a first date. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052. Closes Nov. 10.)

**The New Bozena**—The latest clownings around by the red-nosed trio composed of David Costabile, Michael Dahlen, and Kevin Isola. (Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200.)

**Old Wicked Songs**—Jon Marans' well-written piece of sentimental sanctimony asks the question: Can a blocked, arrogant twenty-five-year-old pianist find wisdom under the tutelage of a suicidal singing teacher who survived the Holocaust? (The answer is yes.) The characters go through their changes neatly, but the audience arrives at the station long before the engine of the plot does. (9/16/96) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

**The One-Minute Play Contest**—A fun and frenzied competition in which audience enthusiasm and a decibel metre decide which sixty-second drama gets the prize (fifty clams) for each heat. Nov. 8 at 8 (preliminaries) and at 10 (semifinals) and Nov. 9 at 8 (finals). (Dicapo Opera Theatre, 184 E. 76th St. 279-4200.)

**O Solo Mio Festival**—The New York Theatre Workshop's solo-performance festival this year features three works, which will run in rotating repertory: Emmett Foster's "So . . . It's Come to This" (about the eighteen years he spent as Joseph Papp's assistant) and "Emmett: A One Mormon Show," and Dael Orlandersmith's "Monster." (79 E. 4th St. 460-5475.)

**Recreation**—In Penn Jillette's new play, set in a Memphis strip club, a Mitty-like man lets his mind wander, and noirish comedy ensues. (Curican, 154 W. 29th St. 736-2533. Closes Nov. 17.)

**Sex and Longing**—Christopher Durang's first new full-length play (and, boy, is it full-length: two hours and forty-five minutes) in ten years is, to profoundly understate the case, a major disappointment. Poor Sigourney Weaver plays a sex addict who finds God, and the stellar Dana Ivey plays the repressed, religiose wife of a senator; her performance is all that keeps the evening from being a total washout. A Lincoln Center Theatre production, directed by Garland Wright. (11/4/96) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Closes Nov. 17.)

**Skylight**—The playwright David Hare's success and his social conscience are still at odds. This time, the inimitable Michael Gambon plays a successful entrepreneur, and the powerful, appealing Lia Williams is his beloved former mistress, who has given up the lush life to teach the underprivileged. Their differences are factored out as systematically as an algebraic equation. Like John Gunter's set—a well-appointed ramshackle flat in the fashionable but dowdy area of Northwest London—the play seems caught between naturalism and symbolism. (9/30/96) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

**Street Scene**—The Willow Cabin Theatre Company presents Elmer Rice's 1929 urban tragedy. (Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 886-1889. Closes Nov. 17.)

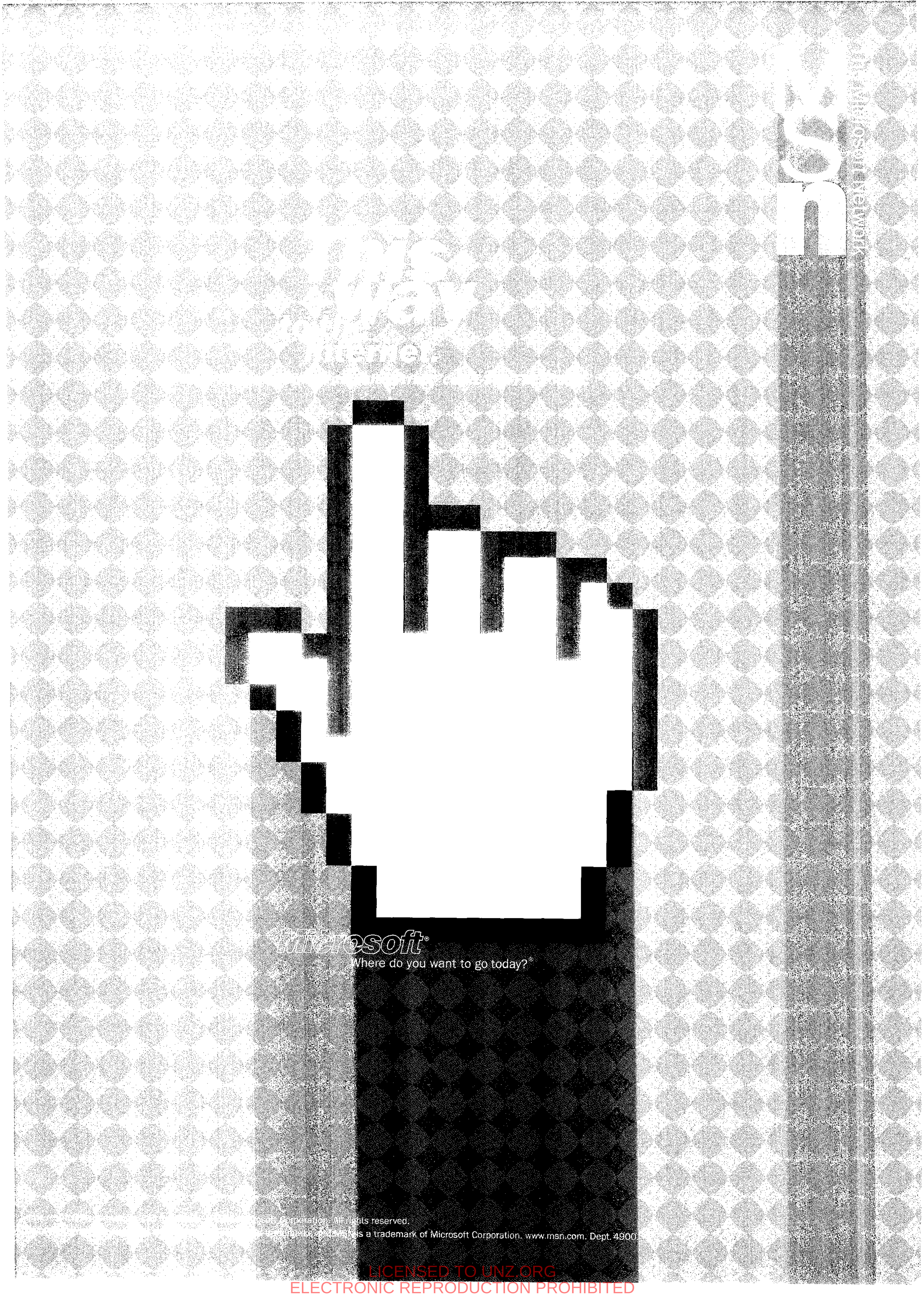
**Taking Sides**—Set in Berlin just after the Second World War, Ronald Harwood's play, part fact and part fiction, stars Daniel Massey as the conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler and Ed Harris as an American Army officer who interrogates him about his alleged ties to the Nazis. (Furtwängler was cleared of all charges.) Harris's character, a tough-talking blowhard, is meant to symbolize the wrongness of unquestioned rightness, and Harwood's Furtwängler spouts a lot of blather about the relationship between art and politics. The play is little more than a pileup of pieties and platitudes; its approach to moral complexity is deeply shallow. (11/4/96) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

**This Is Our Youth**—A new play from the New Group, in which a nineteen-year-old Upper West Sider steals fifteen thousand dollars from his father, then holes up for the night with a friend. Written by Kenneth Lonergan. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

**The Waiting Room**—Lisa Loomer's surrealistic comedy, which stars Veanne Cox, Michele Shay, Chloe Webb, and June Kyoko Lu, is set in a doctor's office and examines the ravages of beauty trends through the ages, from bound feet to breast implants. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

## LONG RUNS

**BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **COWGIRLS:** Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **GREASE!:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **AN IDEAL HUSBAND:** Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE KING AND I:** Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. . . . **LOVE THY NEIGHBOR:** Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MASTER CLASS:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **ROB BECKER'S DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100. . . . **SHOW BOAT:** Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum,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# DANCE

**"THE ARCHITECTURE OF SEEING"**—The choreographer Patricia Hoffbauer and the writer George Emilio Sanchez collaborate on a trilingual multimedia work about mixed cultural identity. Hoffbauer, a transplanted Brazilian, and Sanchez, a first-generation North American with roots in Ecuador, satirize the *National Geographic* approach to indigenous cultures with presentations of pseudofolkloric artifacts: dances and costumes, a living Noble Savage, a Latina talk-show hostess who can turn a casual interview into a citizenship exam. Hoffbauer's work has always had a carnival atmosphere, and she specializes in those funny/uncomfortable moments when the audience wonders: Is she serious here? (An earlier piece at Dance Theatre Workshop included the instantly recognizable voice of D.T.W. director David R. White explaining why the work in progress did not meet his new multicultural programming requirements.) For Sanchez, such outrageousness is "a wild way to talk about some real issues. We want people to laugh, and then to stop and wonder why they are laughing." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Nov. 7-9 at 8 and Nov. 10 at 3. Through Nov. 17.)

**"SURFACE"**—In classes at N.Y.U., the choreographer Wendell Beavers has been playing with a type of developmental movement he calls de-evolved—"movement where the head is below the tail." Its vocabulary of floor work and horizontal motion, which his ad-hoc company of four dancers will be putting on display in these performances, is both recognizable (crawling) and mysterious. "I have a huge following among bodyworkers and chiropractors," Beavers laughs. "And I'm always waiting for people to say to me, 'Hey, that's not dance.' " (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Nov. 7-10 at 8:30.)

**"SPELL FOR OPENING THE MOUTH OF N"**—Joshua Fried is the improvisatory composer of "headphone pieces," which typically require a singer-actor to instantly produce a vocal imitation of whatever sounds he or she receives through a set of headphones. In this collaborative performance, the choreographer Douglas Dunn counters with headphone dances. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Nov. 7-10 at 8.)

**"TANGO X 2"**—Miguel Angel Zotto and Milena Plebs, one of the star couples in "Tango Argentino," return with a new company performing their own choreography. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Nov. 7-9 at 8 and Nov. 10 at 3. Through Nov. 17.)

**"BALLET: THE DARING PROJECT"**—A barnstorming troupe of soloists and principal dancers, including Valentina Kozlova, Charles Askegard, and Christina Fagundes, performs in seven programs that match classical works (the "Black Swan" pas de deux, the "Raymonda" pas de deux) with choreography by Margo Sappington. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Nov. 5-8 at 8, Nov. 9 at 2 and 8, and Nov. 10 at 2 and 7:30.)

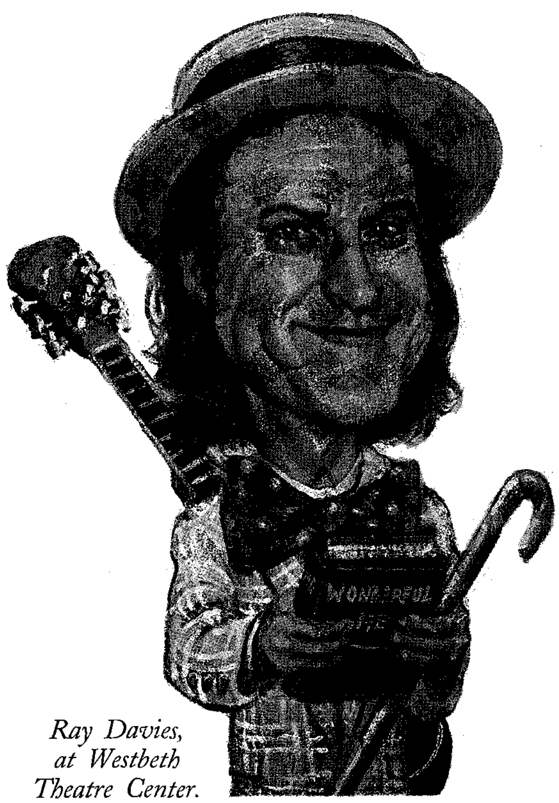
**DANCE AT THE ASIA SOCIETY**—Nov. 6 at 8: Mask Dance of Korea. . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 8 and Nov. 10 at 2: Saeko Ichinohe and Company, in "Homage to Paul Klee." (Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742.)

**"MARTHA AT MOTHER"**—The inaugural performance of a monthly series opens with Richard Move (of Jackie 60, the roving night-club party) impersonating Martha Graham in a lecture on the history of modern dance—in particular, on the contributions of Molissa Fenley, John Kelly, and DANCENOISE's Anne Iobst and Lucy Sexton, all of whom will then perform. (Mother, 432 W. 14th St. 366-5680. Nov. 6 at 9.)

# NIGHT LIFE

## CONCERTS

**RAY DAVIES**—With the possible exception of The Who's Pete Townshend, Davies is the first British Invasion rocker to segue gracefully into middle age. In 1995, he put the Kinks on hold and released a wonderful quasi-autobiography called "X-Ray" (written in the third person, with a protagonist called R.D.), and later that year he embarked on a theatrical tour that turned out to be an acoustic gig interspersed with a handful of lively readings. Now the fifty-one-year-old Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee is back. Far more influential than he's usually credited with being (even Townshend admits that he stole from the Kinks), this great songwriter should be as incorrigible as ever. (Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. 741-0391. Nov. 6-10 at 8.)



*Ray Davies, at Westbeth Theatre Center.*

**KORN / PHARCYDE**—The evil-twin tour. Korn specializes in edgy, head-bobbing thrash; what makes the energetic quintet surprising is its range and its sly sense of humor. "Life Is Peachy," the band's fine new album, features breathy instrumentals, rap parodies, and James Brown-style funk. / Most West Coast rappers deal with guns, drugs, and misogyny, but the Pharcyde's four m.c.s aren't afraid of their feelings. Their talent for acting goofy and singing harmony endears them to women, and their two Lollapalooza tours proved that they can get along with the Waspafarians and the frat boys, too. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Nov. 6 at 8.)

**BILLY TAYLOR TRIO WITH HERBIE MANN**—Still sprightly at seventy-five, the ever agreeable pianist meets the flute-tooting Mann. As long as they don't attempt a bop version of the latter's disco hit, "Hijack," this should be one very pleasant evening. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 7 at 7.)

**RANDY WESTON**—With one foot in Africa and the other in the Big Apple, pianist and composer Weston combines the lyrical smarts of New York bebop with the rhythmic diversity of the African-American diaspora. When his percussive energy infuses the pointillistic poetry of his music, the results can be bracing. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Nov. 7 at 8.)

**GARBAGE**—Long before it became the biggest thing since recycled landfill, this sleek modern-rock combo was admired for the pedigree of its drummer, Butch Vig, an unassuming Wisconsinite who was something of a grunge hero for his role as producer of such seminal records as Nirvana's "Nevermind" and Smashing Pumpkins' "Siamese Dream." No one gives a hoot about him now—with her flair for publicity and dirty talk, lead singer Shirley Manson has usurped his stature and become a major star. This red-headed Scottish Lolita and her dour Midwestern boys put on a fiery show. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 307-7171. Nov. 7 at 8.)

**"TROMBONE TO GLORY"**—The big 'bone may be the underdog of the instrument world, but in the hands of crafty jazz veterans like Al Grey and sleek contemporaries like Steve Turre, its emotive powers thrive. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. Nov. 7 at 8.)

**CESARIA EVORA**—A breath of cool tropical air from the West African archipelago of Cape Verde, Evora is known as the Barefoot Diva, a reference both to her performance style and to the earthy, laid-back feel of *morna*, the dreamy bossa-nova blues that makes her eponymous recent release on Nonesuch so delightful. Although she's a star in France, she rarely performs in the States, which makes this appearance a special occasion. With Madeleine Peyroux (see the Mercury Lounge). (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Nov. 7 at 8.)

**BILL MAYS TRIO**—Think of Mays as Mr. Taste: a cultivated mainstreamer who has yet to play an inelegant phrase. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 874-2990. Nov. 8 at 7:30.)

**THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS**—It's been a decade since John Flansburgh and John Linnell first performed jerky little pop songs while wearing improbably enormous masks. The Brooklyn-based duo have been unmasked for some time, but their jerky little pop songs—precociously crafted and full of surreal humor—still flow unabated. (Roseland. Nov. 8 at 8.)

**DAVE KOZ**—The lite-jazz saxophonist and host of the syndicated radio show "Personal Notes." (Town Hall. Nov. 8 at 8.)

**RAVI SHANKAR**—He's still friendly with George Harrison, he's still fervent about world-music fusion, and, at seventy-six, he's still able to coax jaw-dropping beauty from his sitar. Everyone from the Yardbirds and Yehudi Menuhin to John Coltrane and Philip Glass has come under his influence. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Nov. 8 at 8.)

**PAULO BRAGANÇA**—*Fado* is Portugal's take on soul, a throaty, lonesome cry that speaks of heartache and existential displacement. It's not exactly good-time music, but, performed by a master like Bragança, it's deeply moving stuff. Now that he has a solid international reputation and a hip American label—David Byrne's Luaka Bop—behind him, this may be your last chance to see him before he hits it big. (St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St. Brooklyn. 718-858-2424. Nov. 8 at 8.)

**OUMOU SANGARE**—There's not much in the way of good news coming out of Africa these days, particularly for independent-minded young women, which is why Sangare, a twenty-seven-year-old thrush who's been called the Madonna of Mali, is something of a national heroine. Her sound, unlike that of most African pop stars, is sedate and folkie (the sobriquet has more to do with her feminism than her music, which is mainly *wassoulou*, a genre normally associated with hunting rituals). Most of her songs have just a tapestry of looping guitars, a single violin, and no percussion at all, except, perhaps, for a time-keeping wood block. Her voice is an otherworldly thrill; on first hearing, her melodies have an almost Asian quality. When she lets fly with one of her serpentine phrases, you can hear the continents part. (Symphony Space. Nov. 9 at 8.)

**"FOR BILLY . . . WITH LOVE"**—Billy Higgins has brought so much beauty and pleasure to jazz that it's practically a matter of civic duty to be there

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for him while he recovers from a second liver transplant (the first one was rejected). From his early recordings with Ornette Coleman to his recent work as the most dependably suave drummer on the scene, Higgins has embodied craft, taste, imagination, and versatility. Lending a musical hand to Smiling Billy will be Pat Metheny, Charlie Haden, Ron Carter, Milt Jackson, and other greats. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Nov. 9 at 8.)

**Jimmie Dale Gilmore**—This Texas-bred troubadour was named after country legend Jimmie Rodgers, and his panoramic songs roll on like one of the Singing Brakeman's trains. His latest album, the appropriately titled "Braver New World," finds him, as usual, idealistically blending Southwestern folk and country with Far Eastern philosophy: cowboy Zen's Lone Ranger rides again. (St Ann's Church, Brooklyn. Nov. 9 at 8.)

**"Two Faces of Jewish Music"**—An evening of cantorial songs and high-stepping klezmer. (Eldridge Street Synagogue, 12 Eldridge St., at Canal St. 219-0903. Nov. 10 at 2.)

### CLUBS

*(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)*

**Bottom Line,** 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Nov. 8: **FAIRPORT CONVENTION** plays an acoustic set. Back in the late sixties, this legendary British folk-rock unit hatched the careers of Richard Thompson and Sandy Denny, among others. With founding member Simon Nicol still manning the band's rudder, they sound as rowdy and randy as ever. Nov. 9: **JOHN GORKA.** Over the past decade, this warm-voiced singer-songwriter has quietly amassed a meticulously crafted body of work: six deceptively spare-sounding albums stuffed with hard-earned wisdom, dry wit, and an ear for the redemptive power of love. His latest, "Between Five and Seven," is a coffeehouse keeper.

**Brownies,** 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—Nov. 9: Garage rock with the **FLESHTONES.**

**The Greatest Bar on Earth,** 1 World Trade Center (524-7000)—Hyperbole, perhaps, but it's certainly the highest. And Thursdays through Saturdays you'll find live music, dancing, and dining, a hundred and seven stories above the city.

**Irving Plaza,** 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—Nov. 6: Up-and-coming singer **PAULA COLE.** Nov. 7: **KULA SHAKER.** This quartet, with its retro pop, is regularly compared with other disturbingly popular English throwbacks, but, unlike the Stone Roses and Oasis, the members of Kula Shaker found Hinduism, and the Sanskrit mantras that serve as lyrics on their début album, "K," are a far cry from the sneering cynicism of Oasis. Nov. 9: **MICHELLE SHOCKED.** After a lengthy legal battle, the onetime enfant terrible of the eighties antifolk movement has finally released her 1994 album, "Kind Hearted Woman," a collection of gothic tales from the heartland; like most of her work, it's disturbing and often darkly funny. Nov. 12: The **FIXX** made a splash in 1983 with the hit single "One Thing Leads to Another." The London-based quartet's recordings were crisply produced, and chock full of New Wavy guitars, percolating synths, and the arch, mildy perturbed mewling of singer Cy Curnin. The band seemed to have a long radio career ahead of it, but its pretentious follow-up album, "Phantoms," put an end to that.

**Mercury Lounge,** 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—When **MADELEINE PEYROUX** (Nov. 6) performed here last spring, at a Lincoln Center tribute to Duke Ellington, it was widely observed that the twenty-two-year-old singer seemed capable of channelling the spirit of Billie Holiday. With her jazzy phrasing and astonishing clarity, she does indeed recall Lady Day, but on her début album, "Dreamland," she also finds her way into the songs of Bessie Smith and Patsy Cline. Nov. 10: **SUSANNA HOFFS.** On her new album (her first in five years), the erstwhile Bangle envelops herself in a psychedelic swirl that's far more reminiscent of her old band's early paisley-underground sound than of the shiny-happy pop they flamed out on in the late eighties.

**S.O.B.'s,** 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Nov. 6-7: **ANGELA BOFILL.** Though she's primarily a jazz vocalist, Bofill was brought up on Latin rhythms (by her Cuban father) and Motown soul (by her Puerto Rican mother); both influences are apparent in her repertoire. Dining.

**Tramps,** 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Nov. 7: **IRIS DEMENT.** Back in 1992, when this gentle folk-country singer sprang fully formed from the Carter Family songbook, it would have been hard to imagine her wailing blues duets and railing against the corporate machine. But, on her new, eye-opening album, "The Way I Should," she mouths off with such force you can't help wondering what else she has up those gingham sleeves. Nov. 10: **MORPHINE** is a power trio with a twist: it has no guitar player—just a drummer, a sax player, and a two-string bassist/vocalist. The band's skeletal instrumentation might seem like a drawback, but Morphine takes full advantage of its sonic limitations, weaving monstrous riffs in and around singer Mark Sandman's eerily sinister baritone. With the cello-and-corset sounds of **RASPUTINA.** Nov. 11: The **ROOTS,** a five-man crew that revitalizes classic Philly soul and puts a new spin on nineties hip-hop. With **JERU THE DAMAJA.**

### JAZZ AND STANDARDS

**Algonquin Hotel,** 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **ANDREA MARCOVICCI** is currently at work in the woody nook known as the Oak Room. Dining.

**Birdland,** 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—Nov. 6-9: **HARRY (SWEETS) EDISON.** The great Basie veteran is as concise as his old boss was, playing one piquant note to any other trumpeter's ten. His nonchalant minimalism, nudging tonal inflections, and behind-the-beat feel are so singular that they border on the radical. Dining.

**Blue Note,** 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through Nov. 10: The **JOE HENDERSON** big band. It took Henderson thirty years to get the sounds of his big band onto tape, but it was well worth the wait: they expertly balance their leader's breathy ardor with the wallop of a roaring ensemble. Live, they should be a genuine event. The **WAYNE SHORTER** quintet has the stage starting Nov. 12. Dining.

**Carlyle Hotel,** Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Through New Year's Eve, the great **BOBBY SHORT.**

**Fez,** 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

**Fifty Seven Fifty Seven,** 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A cool, sumptuous piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel. Dining.

**Iridium,** 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through Nov. 10: **DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER** and the **JACKY TERRASSON** trio present a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald.

**Knitting Factory,** 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Nov. 10: Tibetan singer **YOUNGCHEN LHAMO.**

**Rainbow & Stars,** 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. **MAUREEN MC GOVERN** is the current diva-in-residence. Closed Mondays.

**Sweet Basil,** 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Through Nov. 10: **SONNY FORTUNE** is a quadruple threat: he's fluent on the tenor, alto, and soprano saxophones, and he also plays the flute. He came up in the bands of Mongo Santamaria, McCoy Tyner, and Miles Davis, and his accumulated knowledge is evident in his fervent, virtuosic improvisations. Dining.

**Village Vanguard,** 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through Nov. 10: The **ROY HAYNES** quartet. Having played with Lester Young, Charlie Parker, and John Coltrane, Haynes could easily afford to rest on his laurels. Instead, the drummer has made his role of elder statesman an active one, nurturing new jazz talent and handing down the secrets of leading an airtight small group. Pianist **CYRUS CHESTNUT** takes over on Nov. 12. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

## TABLES FOR TWO

**Matthew's,** 1030 Third Ave., at 61st St. (838-4343)—At Matthew Kenney's uptown operation, the fall menu is now in full swing. But the setting is more evocative of a Somerset Maugham summer afternoon—an ambience achieved with cream wainscoting, sepia photographs, and, especially, unbleached canvas, which has been roped to the slowly rotating blades of the ceiling fans, slipcovered onto the chairs, and accordioned over the floor-to-ceiling windows.

The biggest conjurer of warm-weather memories, though, is the menu itself. Kenney's trademarks are condiments, spices, and produce from every shore of the Mediterranean—from Spain to Morocco—which he matches in ensembles. Like a culinary Coco Chanel, he believes that accessories make the look: this season, flat breads come in green olive and garlic; dates, capers, and nut crusts are important. In appetizers, cheeses are key—skinny white triangles of Spanish *manchego* on red lettuces with candy-roasted almonds, or spiced chèvre on walnut-oil-baked beets. Tuna tartare is decked out with a drizzle of khaki tapenade; a fork-soft Moroccan-spiced lamb shank sports a fluffy mantle of fruited couscous.

This fashionable fall cuisine is served by a charming staff in insouciantly oversized cotton pullovers, at tables dressed with meadow flowers and green apples. Kenney, who is also a partner in Mezze, the sybaritic midtown take-out spot, has just announced that he's establishing a port in SoHo, opposite what will be the neighborhood's newest luxury hotel—a move that will make him not only a man for all seasons but all neighborhoods as well. (Entrées $21-$28. Open daily for lunch and dinner.)

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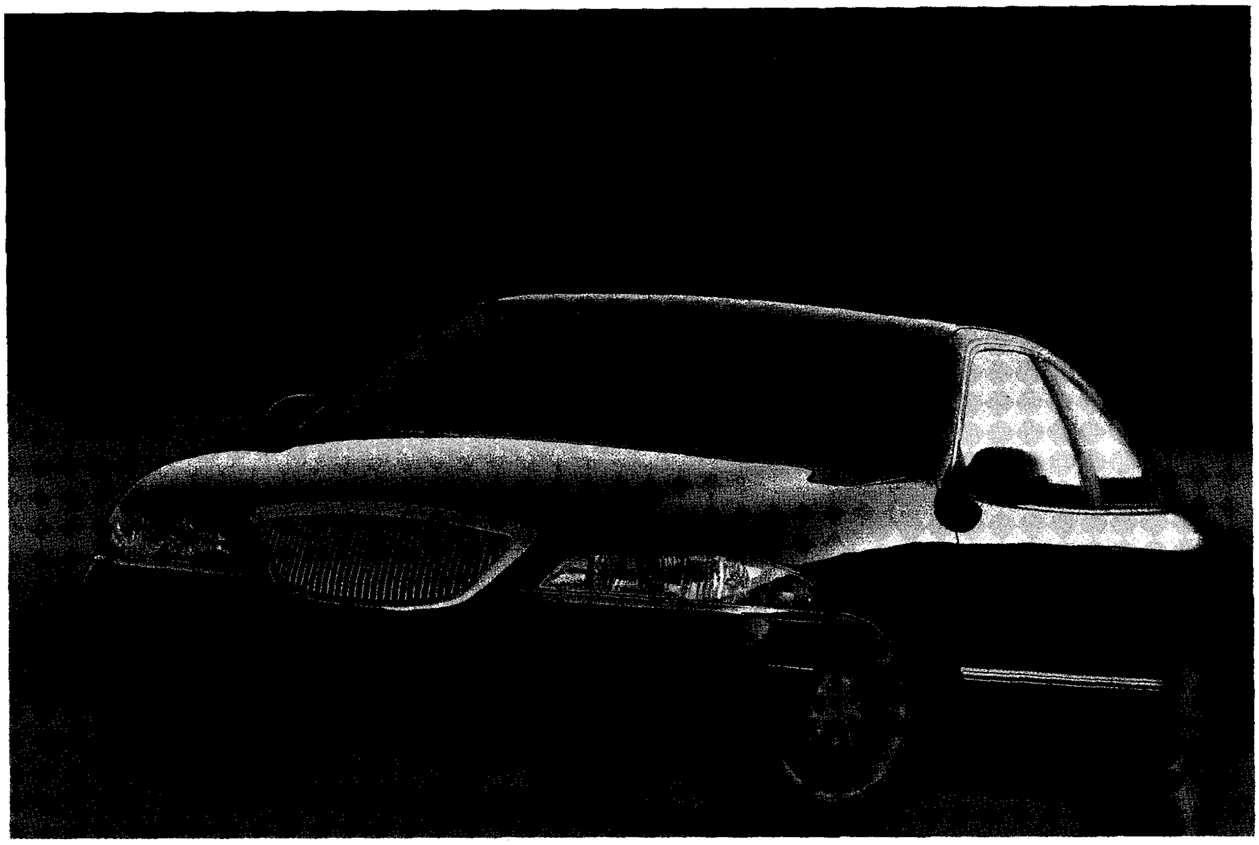

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# ART

## MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

**METROPOLITAN MUSEUM,** Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The largest exhibition of the art of Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot mounted in more than a hundred years poses this question: Was the most celebrated landscape painter of the nineteenth century the visionary precursor of Impressionism or the last, decadent exponent of neo-Classicism? It's a model exhibition, refreshing in its candor (it almost seems designed to take the artist down a peg), and there is certainly a wealth of beautiful paintings to beguile the visitor. Among the most seductive works are the snapshot-like oil sketches of the Roman Campagna and the studies of Italian peasants painted during the artist's first visit to Rome, in the eighteen-twenties. The great Salon paintings on Biblical subjects, particularly the luminous "Hagar in the Wilderness," are as impressive now as they must have been when first exhibited. Yet by the time you reach the late idealized landscapes, that lonely goatherd on the dim riverbank is beginning to look awfully familiar. Through Jan. 19. (For more Corot, see the Brooklyn Museum.) . . . ¶ "Queen Nefertiti and the Royal Women" presents narrative reliefs and sculptures from Egypt's Amarna period (1353-1336 B.C.). A complementary reinstallation of sculptures, reliefs, and other objects is on view in the Amarna Galleries. Through Feb. 2. . . . ¶ "Eugène Cuvelier, Photographer in the Circle of Corot," an exhibit of salted-paper prints from the eighteen-fifties and -sixties: streets and farmyards in the town of Barbizon, and exquisite, atmospheric views of the nearby Fontainebleau Forest. Through Jan. 12. . . . ¶ "Masterpieces in Little: Portrait Miniatures from the Collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II." Through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ "Images of Women: Nineteenth-Century American Drawings and Watercolors" includes works by Sargent, Cassat, Eakins, Homer, and Whistler. Through Feb. 2. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

**MUSEUM OF MODERN ART,** 11 W. 53rd St.—The Jasper Johns retrospective features two hundred and twenty-five works—paintings, drawings, prints, and sculptures—and naturally includes a few flags, targets, numerals, and cross-hatch patterns. Through Jan. 21. (A show of Johns's print work since 1960 is at Castelli, 578 Broadway, through Dec. 14.) . . . ¶ "Antonin Artaud: Works on Paper," an important exhibition of letters and drawings by one of this century's preëminent crazies. Though he is better known for his writing and acting, Artaud (1896-1948) also produced, in his final years (when he was confined to a mental institution), a substantial corpus of drawings in which he gave voice to feelings of profound anguish and lacerating disgust. This work has its place in the Existentialism that was sweeping postwar France (this was the moment of early Dubuffet and Fautrier, as well as of Giacometti's "second" style), although putting it under that historical rubric downplays the bizarre extremes that were Artaud's stock-in-trade. His visual style has elements of both Surrealism and a wrenching realism; as you study his cadaverous portraits, both of himself and of people he knew, Lucian Freud's work may seem almost passé. Through Jan. 7. . . . ¶ "New Photography 12" features work by Richard Billingham, Thomas Demand, Osamu Kanemura, Sophie Ristelhueber, Georgina Starr, and Wolfgang Tillmans. Through Feb. 4. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

**GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM,** Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Ellsworth Kelly," a large survey of the artist's paintings, sculptures, works on paper, and photographs. Through Jan. 19. (For more Kelly, see Galleries—Chelsea.) (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

**WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART,** Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"I'll Be Your Mirror," a retrospective of Nan Goldin's disturbing photographs of the gritty, glamorous downtown life. Through Jan. 5. (A concurrent show of Goldin's pictures of children is at Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St., through Dec. 21.) . . . ¶ "Views from Abroad: European Perspectives on American Art 2" draws from the collections of the Whitney and the Museum für Moderne Kunst, in Frankfurt. Among the artists represented are Stephan Balkenhol, Lawrence Weiner, Jenny Holzer, Charles Ray, and Robert Gober. Through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ "Breuer's Whitney" includes drawings, photographs, models, and other objects chosen to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the opening of Marcel Breuer's gray granite upside-down ziggurat. Through Dec. 8. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

**AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY,** Central Park W. at 79th St.—An exhibit of the Codex Leicester, Leonardo's manuscript on such scientific subjects as hydrodynamics and astronomy. Through Jan. 1. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

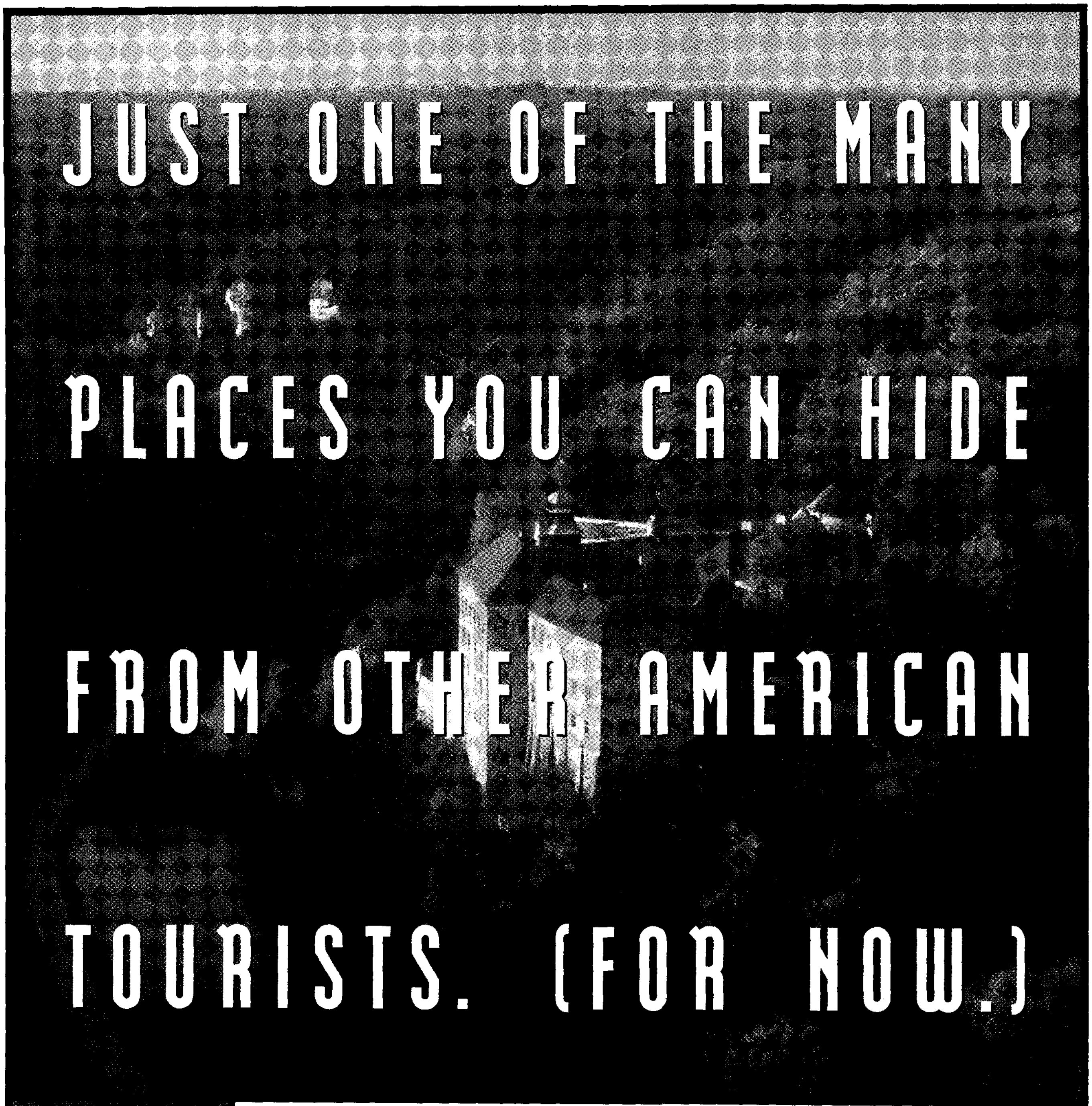
**BROOKLYN MUSEUM,** Eastern Parkway—"In the Light of Italy: Corot and Early Open-Air Painting," an exquisite exhibition of oil sketches which makes a marvellous pendant to the big Corot show at the Met. Among the many highlights are the British painter Thomas Jones's "Wall in Naples" (1782), astonishing for its clarity and economy (its subtle play of rectilinear shapes suggests high modernist painting), and the German Carl Blechen's remarkably abstract studies (the 1829 "Cloud Strokes" seems to consist of no more than a few horizontal swipes of the brush). Through Jan. 12. . . . ¶ "Photography in Latin America: A Spiritual Journey." Through Jan. 19. . . . ¶ "The Evidence of Things Not Seen: Drawings by Glenn Ligon." Through Jan. 19. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

**COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM,** Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—It's hard to tell the museum shop from the galleries here: "Mixing Messages" is a dazzling display of commercial graphic design, encompassing posters, books, magazines, stationery, toothpaste boxes, T-shirts, movie credits, CD-ROMs—anything and everything that uses type. Through Feb. 17. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

**MORGAN LIBRARY,** 29 E. 36th St.—The heart of the Morgan collection is its stock of Rembrandts, the greatest of which are now on view in "A Fine Line: Rembrandt as Etcher." Every impression here is exquisite, from the splendid copy of "The Hundred Guilder Print" to a postage-stamp-size self-portrait as a goggle-eyed, openmouthed youth. In the series illustrating scenes from the life of Jesus, the gorgeously printed "Adoration of the Shepherds: A Night Piece" is especially fine, its figures just visible in a rich, velvety midnight gloom. . . . ¶ "Seventeenth-Century Dutch Drawings," a selection of seventy-five Baroque works which includes, among other odds and ends, a strange pair of copies of Mogul miniatures by Rembrandt and some brilliantly colored genre scenes by Adriaen van Ostade. Both shows through Jan. 5. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

**NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN,** Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Powerful Expressions: Recent American Drawings" includes five works each by fifteen artists, among them Jim Dine, Sidney Goodman, R. B. Kitaj, Susan Rothenberg, Jasper Johns, and Elizabeth Murray. Through Jan. 5. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

**NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN,** 1 Bowling Green—"Woven by the Grandmothers," a display of nineteenth-century Navajo textiles from the museum's collection. Through Jan. 8. . . . ¶ Thirty-eight contemporary Navajo rugs and tapestries are on view, from the collection of the Denver Art Museum. Through Jan. 8. (Open daily, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8.)



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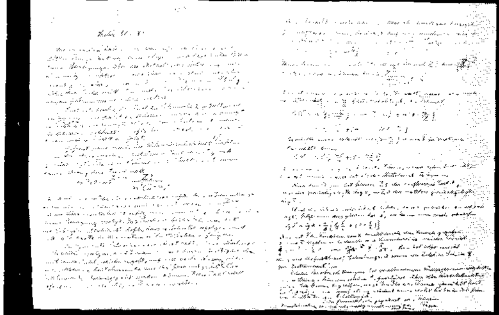

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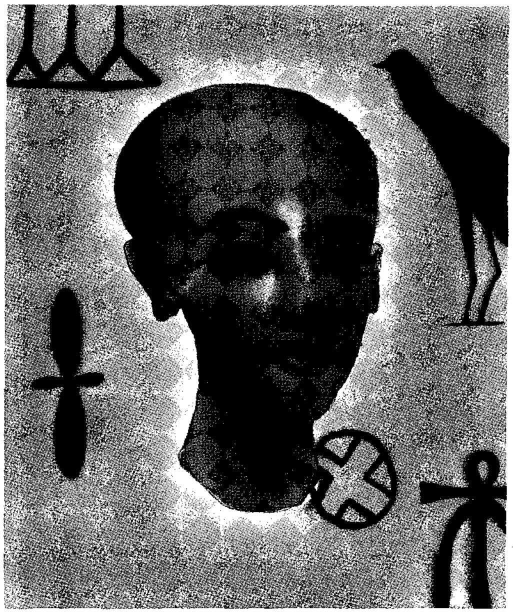

*"Queen Nefertiti and the Royal Women," at the Metropolitan Museum.*

KAREEM ILLYA

## GALLERIES—UPTOWN

*(Unless otherwise noted, uptown and downtown galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6; Chelsea galleries are generally closed Tuesdays and open Sundays.)*

**TAMARA DE LEMPICKA** (1898-1980)—In image after image of luminous women, gleaming cityscapes, and Deco calla lilies, de Lempicka smoothes away the bulks and creases of reality, marrying Léger's machine aesthetic to the more academic *retour à l'ordre* that preoccupied artists in the twenties after the twin insanities of Cubism and the First World War. The men have the accoutrements of power—dapper suits, aristocratic canes—but their eyes are blank; it is the self-possessed women (from society, myth, and the brothel), with their helmets of hair and their painted lips, whose heavy-lidded eyes hold the knowing gazes. Also on display are works by the artist-architect Iakov Chernikhov (1889-1951). Through Nov. 30. (Friedman, 32 E. 67th St.)

**EDWIN DICKINSON** (1891-1978)—A survey of the portraits and landscapes of a gifted, unjustly neglected American painter who spent much of his career on Cape Cod. The gloomy, turbulent seascapes and the soft-focus glimpses of New England houses and lawns (the latter executed in a restrained, beige-dominated palette) are more audacious than they seem at first glance, and they work their charm subtly. There are a few bursts of visionary fire, too: a self-portrait from 1914 has patches of vigorous near-abstraction that are as bold as just about anything that was going on in Europe at the time. Through Nov. 30. (De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. . . . **NOTE:** One floor down, another show of Dickinson's paintings is at Babcock, through Nov. 22.)

**PHILIP GUSTON** (1913-80)—Some of the most important of the so-called cartoon paintings of the seventies, the artist's final outpouring of inspiration. Through Nov. 9. (McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

**JACOB LAWRENCE**—More than forty drawings executed since 1946 by the American narrative painter. Through Nov. 9. (DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

**LUCAS SAMARAS**—A double show. On 57th Street, a survey of works in all sorts of mediums, from 1958 to the present. In SoHo, a selection of previously unexhibited Polaroid "Photo Transformations" from the early seventies. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St., through Nov. 23; and 142 Greene St., starting Nov. 8.)

**KARL SCHRAG** (1912-95)—Self-portraits spanning fifty-five years display this German-born artist's lovely, painterly touch and sly sense of humor. The influence of Chagall is evident throughout, and occasionally the whimsy gets out of hand; in a painting called "Thoughts," the artist wears a hugely overstated lady's floral hat, and his eyes have been rounded and exaggerated nearly to Margaret Keane proportions. Yet throughout the exhibit his gentle personality insinuates itself agreeably. Through Nov. 16. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

**"MAN RAY AT THE RUE FÉROU"**—A selection of works—drawings, collages, *cliché-verres*, paintings, photographs, and objects—made by the artist between 1951 and 1976 at his Paris studio. Through Jan. 4. (Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St.)

**"MASTERS OF AMERICAN SCULPTURE"**—A blue-chip gathering of pieces by Alexander Calder, Mark di Suvero, Richard Serra, and David Smith. Through Dec. 21. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

**"THE SUBVERTED OBJECT"**—Dada and friends, by such diverse practitioners as Man Ray, Meret Oppenheim, Arman, Marcel Broodthaers, Ed Kienholz, Rebecca Horn, Dieter Rot, Richard Pettibone, and Tom Sachs. Through Jan. 4. (Ubu, 16 E. 78th St.)

**SCULPTORS GUILD**—The fifty-eighth annual exhibition comprises thirty-nine pieces in a wide range of styles and mediums. Through Nov. 21. (Lever House, 390 Park Ave., at 54th St. Open Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

**SHORT LIST**—**RONALD BLADEN**, Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St. Through Dec. 21. . . . **FERNANDO BOTERO** and **GRISHA BRUSKIN**, Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; both shows through Nov. 23. . . . **ELAINE DE KOONING**, Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. Through Nov. 30. . . . **ERIC FISCHL**, Boone, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Dec. 21. . . . **LOUISE FISHMAN**, Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 16. . . . **LUCIAN FREUD**, Acquavella, 18 E. 79th St. Open Mondays; through Nov. 16. . . . **PAUL GEORGES**, Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. Open Mondays; through Nov. 9. . . . **ALAN GUSSOW**, MB Modern, 41 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 23. . . . **JOHN HULL**, Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. Through Nov. 29. . . . **HENRI MATISSE**, C & M Arts, 45 E. 78th St. Through Dec. 7. . . . **EMIL NOLDE** and **CHRISTIAN ROHLFS**, Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. Both shows through Nov. 9. . . . **GERHARD RICHTER**, Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; through Nov. 30. . . . **DAVID ROW**, Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 9. . . . **HOUGHTON CRANFORD SMITH**, York, 21 E. 65th St. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays; through Nov. 15. . . . **CARROLL TODD**, Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 23.

## GALLERIES—CHELSEA

**CARL ANDRE**—"Prospective Retrospective," a survey of rigorously simple yet rarefied sculptures from the sixties to the present, including a timber piece, a 1966 "scatter" installation consisting of such humdrum elements as pulley wheels and ball bearings, and a few of the artist's signature modular plate pieces. Through Nov. 23. (Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. Open Tuesdays; closed Sundays.)

**ELLSWORTH KELLY**—Seven new paintings conceived specifically for this gallery's space. Through Jan. 19. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. Closed Wednesdays; opens at noon. . . . ¶ A show of Kelly's prints is at Joni Moisant Weyl, 375 West Broadway, through Nov. 13.)

**ANDY SPENCE**—"Twenty Years of Painting." Often this abstractionist relies on an almost subliminal optical pulsation generated by the rhythmic repetition of rectilinear and curvilinear shapes. The competence and elegance of the works in this survey are givens; whether they advance the discourse of abstract painting is another matter. Through Nov. 24. (Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St.)

**SHORT LIST**—**LORNA BIEBER** and **PAMELA HARRIS**, Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. Open Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8; Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6; both shows through Nov. 17. . . . **ANN**

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**DALY,** Kirkland, 504 W. 22nd St. Through Nov. 24. . . . **RENÉE GREEN,** Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. Through Nov. 24. . . . **MANUEL OCAMPO,** Nosei, 530 W. 22nd St. Open Tuesdays, closed Sundays; through Nov. 9. . . . **PIETER SCHOOLWERTH,** Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. Opens Sundays at noon; through Nov. 24. . . . **BRENDA ZLAMANY,** Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. Through Nov. 24.

## GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

**RICHARD SERRA**—"58x64x70," six massive solid-steel blocks (the title refers to their measurements), each one weighing thirty-six tons; if you rap your knuckles on them, you'll hear not even the faintest interior echo. What is consistently amazing about Serra's sculptures (as opposed to his oft-exhibited oil-stick drawings) is the daunting lengths to which he goes with them. Knowing the mass of this work completely alters your relationship to it: were each block a hollow, welded structure, it would look the same, but the effect would be far less impressive. Serra's best work is the aesthetic equivalent of winning through intimidation. Through Dec. 14. (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St.)

**NANCY SPERO**—Three concurrent shows of recent work. At **TILTON** (49 Greene St.; through Nov. 9), "Sheela Na-Gig at Home," an installation of hand-printed images of the Celtic fertility figure, hung up to dry with various pieces of lingerie on a clothesline that snakes around the gallery. At **P.P.O.W** (532 Broadway; through Nov. 16), the hundred-and-eighty-foot scroll "Black and the Red III." **KUNSTHALLE** (210 E. 5th St., at Third Ave.; open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6; through Nov. 10) features two hand-printed silk banners.

**WILLIAM WEGMAN**—New paintings and drawings that incorporate greeting cards and photographs as collage elements. No weimaraners here: most of these pictures are landscapes. Some of the drawings have a certain lazy whimsy; the paintings, on the other hand, are big, murky, disagreeably messy affairs. Through Nov. 30. (Gorney, 100 Greene St.)

**"OOOH BABY!"**—A funny, spare selection of paintings, photographs, and sculptures of infants. Through Nov. 9. (Ricco/Maresca, 152 Wooster St.)

**"PASSWORD: FERDYDURKE"**—A grab bag of videos, film and slide projections, digital works, and more, from David Dixon, Erwin Redl, Bigtwin, and Perry Hoberman, among others. Through Nov. 9. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

**"PLAINS INDIAN DRAWINGS, 1865-1935"**—A large exhibition of ledger drawings—works made on paper from bound books appropriated from white traders and officers—by artists from the Lakota, Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Arapaho tribes. Through Dec. 21. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

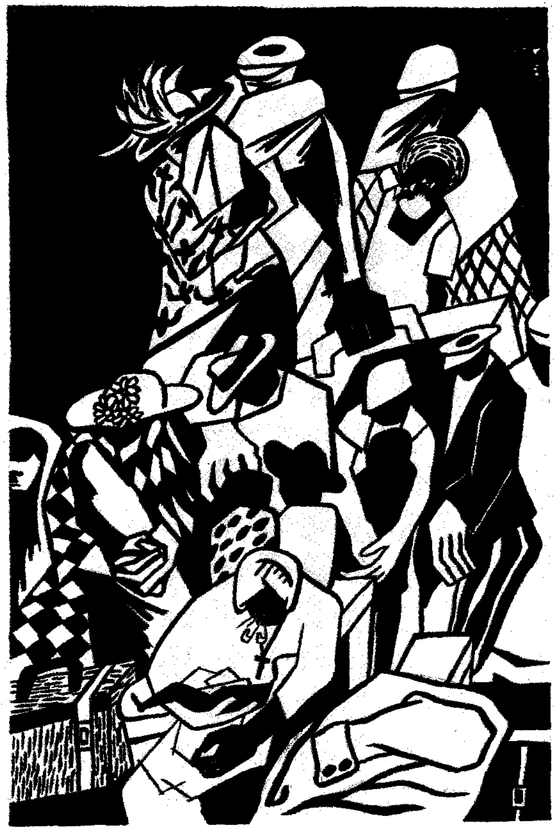
**JOHN WEBER GALLERY**—A twenty-fifth anniversary show of works by younger artists in the stable, including Paul Bloodgood, Mariko Mori, Kim Jones, Luca Buvoli, and Seton Smith. Through Nov. 16. (142 Greene St.)

**SHORT LIST**—**IDA APPLEBROOG,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. Through Dec. 7. . . . **ARMANDO,** Tz'art, 28 Wooster St. Through Nov. 23. . . . **JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT,** Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. Through Nov. 23. . . . **MEL BOCHNER,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. Through Nov. 30. . . . **JANE FINE** and **SUSAN BLACK,** Kaplan, 48 Greene St. Both shows through Nov. 9. . . . **GLENN GOLDBERG** and **RICHARD VAN BUREN,** E. S. Vandam, 100 Vandam St. Opens at noon; both shows through Nov. 16. . . . **APRIL GORNIK,** Thorp, 103 Prince St. Through Nov. 9. . . . **DAN GRAHAM** and **AURA ROSENBERG,** Wooster Gardens, 558 Broadway. Both shows through Nov. 9. . . . **MARK INNERST,** Marcus, 578 Broadway. Through Nov. 16. . . . **HARRIET KORMAN,** Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway. Through Nov. 16. . . . **JOSEPH MARIONI,** Blum, 99 Wooster St. Through Dec. 28. . . . **BRUCE NAUMAN,** Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. Through Dec. 14. . . . **ALBERT OEHLEN,** Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. Through Nov. 16. . . . **MATTHEW RITCHIE,** Basilico Fine Arts, 26 Wooster St. Through Nov. 23. . . . **DAVID SANDLIN,** White Columns, 154 Christopher St. Through Nov. 27. . . . **BEVERLY SEMMES,** Klein, 40 Wooster St. Through Nov. 30. . . . **PAUL SHAPIRO** and **HELEN EVANS FEBBO,** Perlow, 560 Broadway. Both shows through Nov. 30. . . . **DONALD SULTAN,** Kasmin, 74 Grand St. Through Dec. 7. . . . **FRANZ WEST,** Zwirner, 43 Greene St. Through Nov. 30. . . . **ANDREA ZITTEL,** Rosen, 130 Prince St. Through Dec. 7.

# PHOTOGRAPHY

**PETAH COYNE / JULIA MARGARET CAMERON** (1815-79)—Eighteen black-and-white prints by the sculptor, from four series: "Monks," "Piñata," "Carnival," and "Fourth of July, 1995." / Original albumen prints of Cameron's well-known portraits (including Mrs. Herbert Duckworth and Sir John Herschel), along with a group of allegorical studies. Both shows through Dec. 28. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St.)

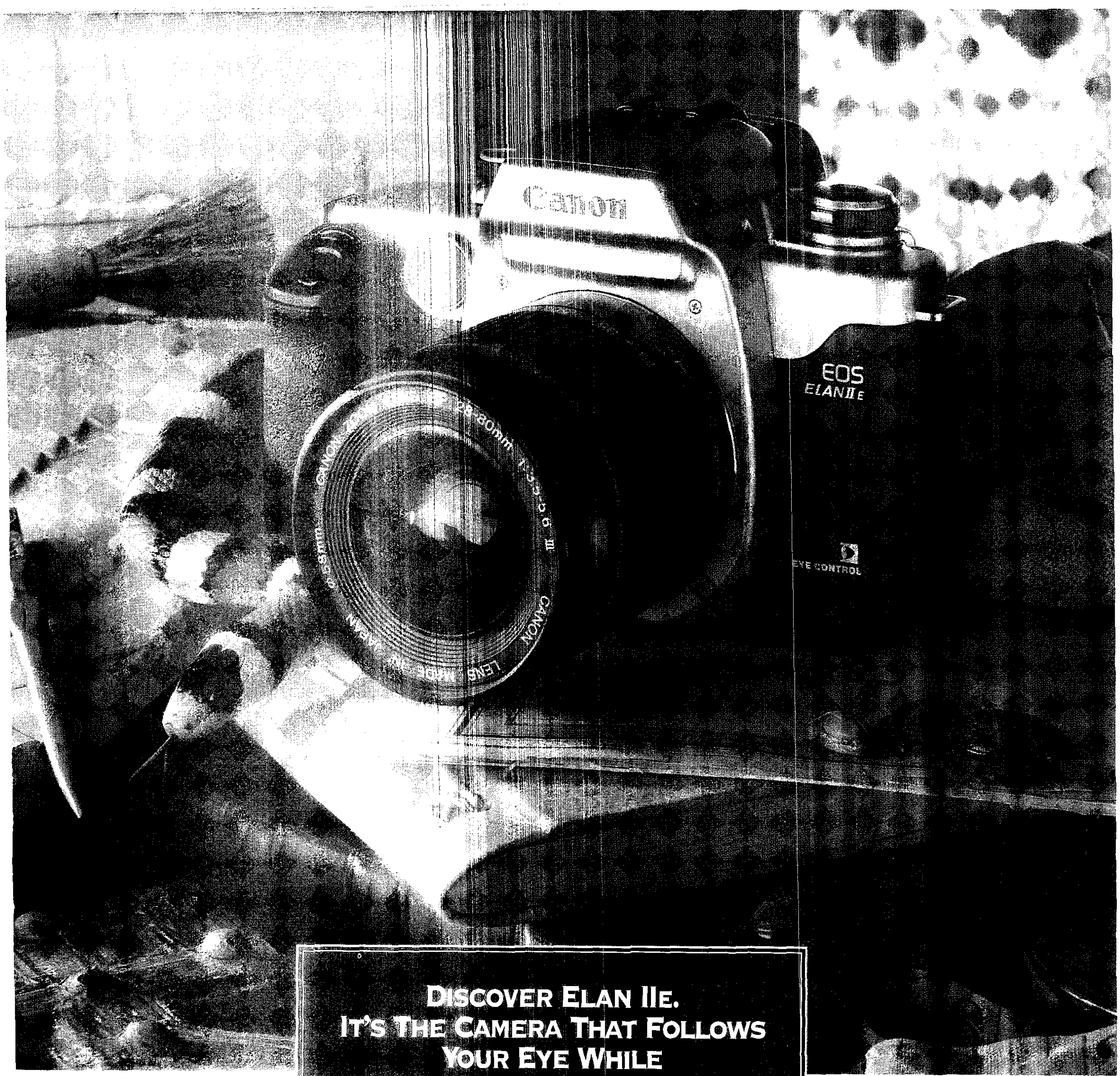
**LEE FRIEDLANDER**—"The Desert Seen," two dozen plain, disturbing, and gorgeous visions of the Sonoran Desert in Arizona. Through Nov. 23. (Borden, 560 Broadway.)

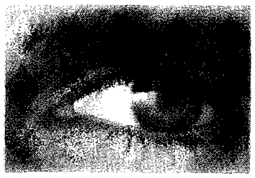


*"One-Way Ticket II," by Jacob Lawrence (DC Moore).*

**CHARLES HOFF** (1905-75)—Twenty pictures of boxers in the ring, by a midcentury newspaperman who brilliantly captured the drama of the moment of impact. Through Nov. 16. (Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St.)

**CINDY SHERMAN**—The artist's first feature film, a horror movie, is due out early next year, and the large-scale color photographs in this exhibit reflect her immersion in the world of slashers, axe wielders, and cannibalistic mutants. The pictures are all head shots, and often it's hard to tell whether they represent





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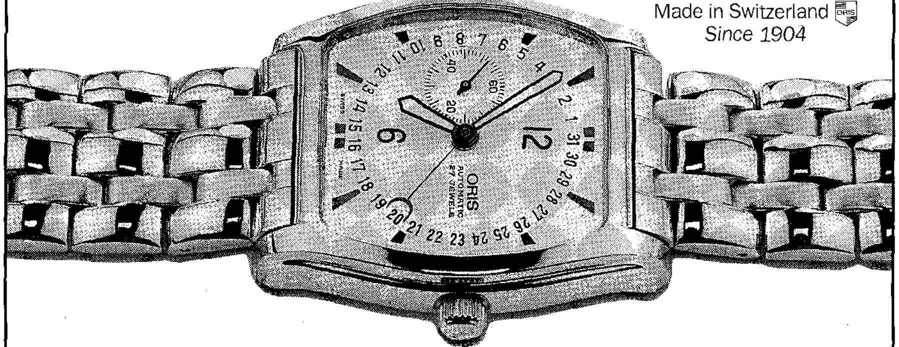

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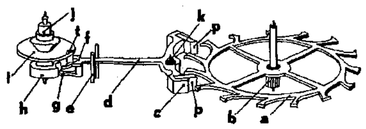

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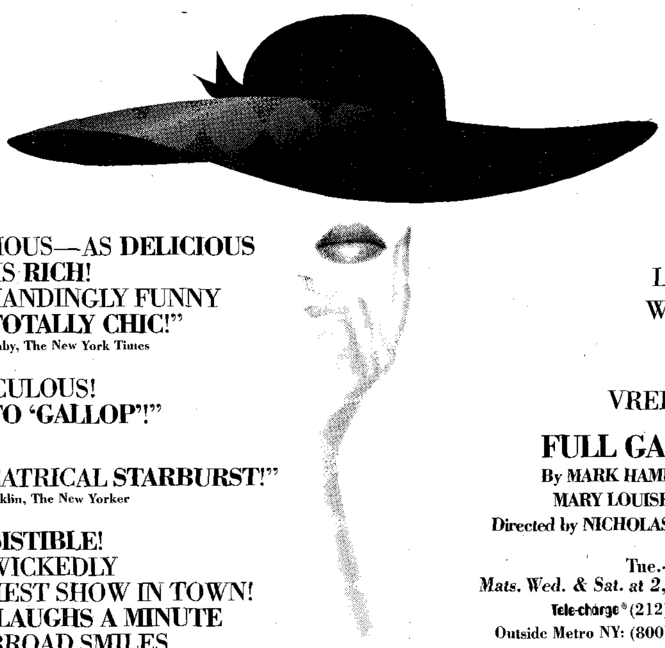

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-Nancy Franklin, The New Yorker

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-John Simon, New York Magazine

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victims or maniacs. Through Nov. 23. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

**Tseng Kwong Chi** (1950-90)—In 1979, when the artist made his way to New York City, he immediately lit out on what would become his life's work—an obsessive series of self-portraits at monuments, tourist attractions, and vista points, mostly in Europe and North America: the Statue of Liberty, the Eiffel Tower, the Grand Canyon, the Provincetown dunes. Striking impassive poses in mirrored sunglasses and a gray Mao suit and often wearing a clip-on photo I.D., Tseng made images that stand ideas of tourism, nationality, power, and aesthetics on their head even while betraying a wistful, fragile sensibility. Through Nov. 30. (Saul, 560 Broadway.)

**Masao Yamamoto**—"A Box of Ku." *Ku* is Japanese for "air," "emptiness," and "sky"; this enchanting installation comprises scores of small pictures, some taped to the wall, some in decorative frames. Through Nov. 16. (Richardson, 560 Broadway.)

**Iwao Yamawaki** (1898-1987)—Elegant abstractions made between 1930 and 1932, when the Japanese avant-garde architect was studying at the Bauhaus. Through Nov. 16. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St.)

**"Landscapes of the Civil War"**—If you haven't yet made it to this show, you're no patriot. Fifty-four hundred albumen prints of Civil War subjects were discovered in 1990 in a wooden chest in the Medford (Massachusetts) Historical Society; nearly a hundred of them are on view here. Among the images captured by Barnard, Brady, Gardner, O'Sullivan, and many unidentified photographers are young infantry volunteers, Confederate dead, a serene panoramic view of cavalry stables, Richmond in ruins, and a Stygian Charleston Harbor encircling the defeated Fort Sumter. Through Nov. 10. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

**Group Show**—An exhibition celebrating the twenty-year presence in Paris of the Zabriskie gallery, whose 57th Street branch has introduced such photographers as Edouard Baldus, Laure Albin-Guillot, John Batho, and Pierre Boucher to the United States. Through Nov. 15. (La Maison Française, New York University, 16 Washington Mews. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays.)

**Short List**—**DAWOUD BEY,** Beitzel, 102 Prince St. Through Nov. 9. . . . **PHIL BORGES** and **JOHN CLAUDE WHITE,** Lowinsky, 578 Broadway. Both shows through Nov. 16. . . . **HORACE BRISTOL,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 16. . . . **CHUCK CLOSE,** Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 23. . . . **MARGARET COURTNEY-CLARKE,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Through Nov. 30. . . . **NAN GOLDIN,** Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. Through Dec. 21. . . . **SHARON LOCKHART,** Petzel, 26 Wooster St. Through Dec. 7. . . . **ABELARDO MORELL,** Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. Through Nov. 30. . . . **MATTHIEU RICARD,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. Through Dec. 28. . . . **STEPHEN SACK,** Danziger, 130 Prince St. Through Nov. 23. . . . **ROMAIN SLOCOMBE,** Feature, 76 Greene St. Through Nov. 23. . . . **ALEX WEBB,** Leica, 670 Broadway. Opens Saturdays at noon; through Dec. 7.

*(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Brooklyn Museum.)*

## AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

**Christie's**—Nov. 6: Prints from the collection of John Wesley Warrington. . . . ¶ Nov. 7: Contemporary prints and multiples, including a large group by Jasper Johns. (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1000.) . . . At **CHRISTIE'S EAST:** Impressionist and modern paintings. (219 E. 67th St. 606-0400. Nov. 12.)

**Sotheby's**—Nov. 7-8: Old Master and nineteenth-century prints. . . . ¶ Nov. 9: Contemporary prints. . . . ¶ Nov. 12-13: Impressionist and modern works, including five pieces by Degas and Monet from the Shelburne Museum. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

**Print Fair 1996**—Eighty-nine exhibitors display their wares. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. For information, call 759-4469. Nov. 8-10.)

# CLASSICAL MUSIC

*(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 875-5050, and for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800.)*

## OPERA

**Metropolitan Opera**—**l'elisir d'amore,** with Barbara Bonney, Roberto Alagna, Simon Keenlyside (in his company début), and Paul Plishka; conducted by Carlo Rizzi. (Nov. 6 at 8 and Nov. 9 at 1:30.) . . . **carmen,** with Angela Gheorghiu, Waltraud Meier, Plácido Domingo, and Sergei Leiferkus; James Levine. (Nov. 7 and Nov. 12 at 8.) . . . **rigoletto,** with Ruth Ann Swenson, Frank Lopardo, and Juan Pons; Mr. Rizzi. (Nov. 8 and Nov. 11 at 8.) . . . **la traviata,** with Ainhoa Arteta, Marcello Giordani, and Roberto Frontali; Maurizio Barbacini. (Nov. 9 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

**New York City Opera**—**carmen.** (Nov. 6 and Nov. 9 at 8.) . . . **les contes d'hoffmann,** in the first performances of a new production that employs musicologist Michael Kaye's new grand-opera edition (which is to say, with sung recitatives) of Offenbach's uncompleted masterpiece; with Olga Makarina, Patricia Johnson, and Lauren Flanigan as the three incarnations of the fantasies of the title character, played by Allan Glassman. (Nov. 7, Nov. 10, and Nov. 12, all at 8.) . . . **le nozze di figaro.** (Nov. 8 at 8.) . . . **h.m.s. pinafore.** (Nov. 9 at 1:30.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

**Peking Opera**—A benefit performance of "Crossroads," an acrobatic showcase in which the action on the brightly lit stage is presumed to take place in total darkness, and Guan Han Chin's "River View Pavilion," a comedy that offers a rare chance to see two great Chinese stars, Xue Yaping and Sun Zhengyang. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Lexington Ave. at 68th Street. 744-8181, ext. 131. Nov. 9 at 4.)

## ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

**New York Philharmonic**—The orchestra's American Classics initiative continues with a performance of Roy Harris's Third Symphony (composed in 1939), a one-movement exemplar of the wide-open-spaces sound of the W.P.A. era. Also on the program are Bruch's "Scottish Fantasy" and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Zdenek Macal conducts. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Nov. 7, Nov. 9, and Nov. 12, all at 8, and Nov. 8 at 11 a.m.)

**Riverside Symphony**—We probably have the French composer Henri Dutilleux's eightieth birthday to thank for his stronger-than-usual representation in this year's concert programs. His works deserve the exposure: their mélange of latter-day French Impressionism and edgy modernism is a beautifully evocative idiom. It's particularly gratifying to see a number of his works that were well received when new getting long-overdue second performances and overseas premières. A case in point is "L'Arbre des Songes" (a concerto in everything but name), which has not been played in town since Isaac Stern and the Montreal Symphony performed it here ten years ago. In this performance, George Rothman conducts the work, and the young French violinist Olivier Charlier serves as soloist. Completing the program are works by two of Dutilleux's precursors, Debussy (excerpts from "Images") and Ravel (his "Une Barque sur l'Océan"). (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 6 at 8.)

**San Francisco Symphony**—At Carnegie Hall, Michael Tilson Thomas conducting. Nov. 6 at 8: John Adams's "Lollapalooza," Ives's "Holidays" Symphony (with the Dessoff Symphonic Choir), and selections from Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet." . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 8: Lou Harrison's "Parade," Penderecki's Violin Concerto No. 2 (with Anne-Sophie Mutter), and Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique."

**St. George's Choral Society**—Kyler Brown, newly installed as the choir's music director, leads Vierne's "Messe Solennelle" and Poulenc's "Litanies à la Vierge Noire," among other works. (St. George's Church, 16th St. and Rutherford Pl., east of Third Ave. 475-1463. Nov. 7 at 8.)

**Orpheus Chamber Orchestra**—A program of Russian works that are more complex than one might expect from a conductorless ensemble: Schnittke's "Suite in the Old Style," Tchaikovsky's "Variations on a Rococo Theme" (featuring cellist Mischa Maisky), and Shostakovich's Symphony No. 14 (with soprano Ljuba Kazarnovskaya and bass Gennady Bezzubenkov). (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 9 at 8.)

**City Island Baroque Ensemble**—Rebecca Young is the soloist in viola concertos by the eighteenth-century father and son Johann and Carl Stamitz. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 718-885-2478. Nov. 10 at noon.)

**Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra**—During the past two years, this period-instrument ensemble has been recording Bach's cantatas for what is slated to become a complete series (on the Erato label). The group's founding director, Ton Koopman, already had a strong reputation as an interpreter of the composer's keyboard works; the recent recordings suggest that he is just as strong leading others. In this concert he and his forces scale the summit of Bach's towering B-Minor Mass, abetted by soloists Barbara Schlick (soprano), Elisabeth von Magnus (mezzo-soprano), and Klaus Mertens (baritone). (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Nov. 10 at 3.)

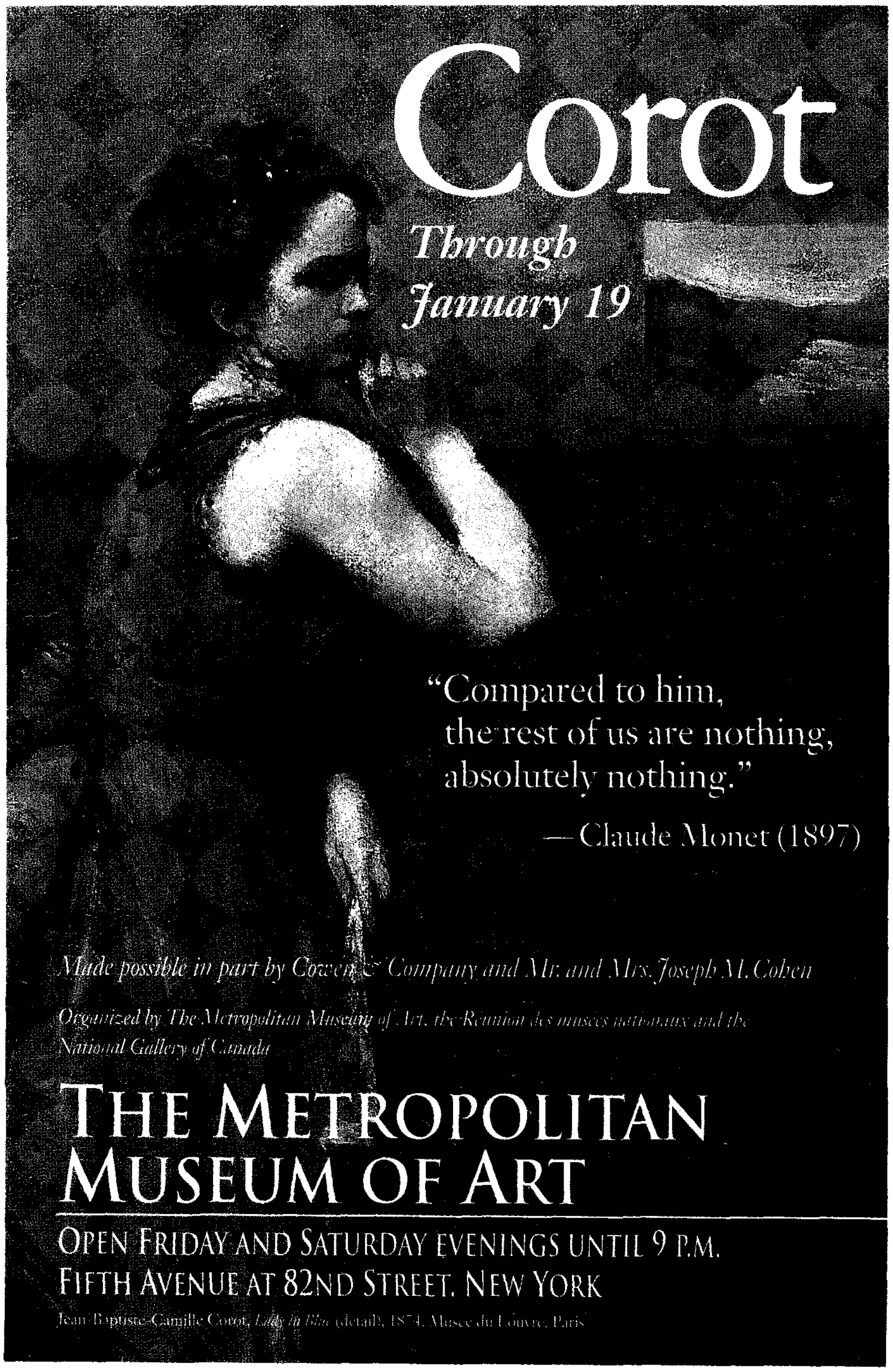
**Met Orchestra**—James Levine conducts the orchestra and the Metropolitan Opera Chorus in Berlioz's dramatic oratorio "La Damnation de Faust" (so dramatic, in fact, that it has often been presented as a full-fledged opera); with mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter, tenor Giuseppe Sabbatini, and bass-baritone José van Dam (whose recording of Schumann's "Dichterliebe" has been getting ecstatic reactions from audiences attending the play "Old Wicked Songs" at the Promenade Theatre). (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 10 at 3.)

**Concert Royal**—The period-instrument orchestra offers all six of Bach's "Brandenburg" Concertos, with James Richman presiding from the harpsichord. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 11 at 8.)

**St. Thomas Choir**—Masses by Kodály (his Missa Brevis) and Widor (Op. 36, for two choirs and two organs), directed by Gerre Hancock. (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. 757-7013, ext. 3027. Nov. 12 at 7:30.)

## RECITALS

**David Hill**—The organist of England's Winchester Cathedral, performing works by Bach, Franck,



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FIFTH AVENUE AT 82ND STREET, NEW YORK

Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Lady in Blue* (detail), 1874. Musée du Louvre, Paris

Liszt, and others. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. 288-2520. Nov. 6 at 8.)

**Sonic Boom Festival**—The annual autumnal modern-music celebration continues. Nov. 6 at 8: The New York New Music Ensemble offers recent works by Davidovsky, Martino, Wuorinen, Margaret DeWys, James Winn, Jonathan Kramer, Paul Stanhope, and James Primosch. . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 8: The piano duo Double Edge performs pieces by "Blue" Gene Tyranny, Steve Reich, Bun-Ching Lam, Guy Klucevsek, Morton Feldman, and Kitty Brazelton; of unusual interest is a screening of René Clair's twenty-one-minute Dadaist film, "Cinéma Entr'acte" (1924), which the musicians will accompany with the score Satie prepared as a "soundtrack." (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799.)

**Bargemusic**—Nov. 6 at 8:30 (by candlelight, and preceded by a reception and dinner), Nov. 7 at 7:30, and Nov. 10 at 4: Chamber works by Beethoven and Brahms (his G-Minor Piano Quartet), with violinist Mark Peskanov, violist Cynthia Phelps, cellist Ronald Thomas, and pianist André-Michel Schub. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061.)

**Jean-Philippe Collard**—The pianist performs the concluding recital of the Miller Theatre's festival of French piano playing. Despite his splendid credentials (which include an extensive and acclaimed discography), Collard rarely appears on New York's recital stages; this appearance may have to satisfy his fans for quite some time. In this concert he performs works by Fauré (including his Theme and Variations, Op. 73) and Rachmaninoff (his Sonata No. 2 and several preludes). (Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Nov. 7 at 8.)

**Christopher Parkening**—Classical guitarist, in a recital of music by Sor, de Falla, Villa-Lobos, and others; with David Brandon (also a classical guitarist) and Jubilant Sykes (a baritone). (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 7 at 8.)

**ARTEK**—The period-instrument ensemble's continuo group assists soprano Jessica Tranzillo in a program of Baroque sacred works. (The Lady Chapel, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Fifth Ave. at 50th St. Nov. 7 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

**Andreas Schmidt**—The German baritone so thoroughly absorbed the vocal and interpretative techniques of his mentor, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, that he used to sound like a dead ringer for the older artist; but he has long since blossomed into an eminent musician with his own distinct personality. In this concert (which, incredibly, is his New York début recital), he and pianist Rudolf Jansen perform Schubert's song cycle "Die Schöne Müllerin." (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Nov. 8 at 8.)

**Paula Robison and Friends**—The flutist joins colleagues for a concert of Baroque music by Handel and Vivaldi. (Temple of Dendur, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 8-9 at 7.)

**Virgil Vigil**—The composer, critic, and bon vivant Virgil Thomson would have turned one hundred later this month—he came close to achieving that milestone, since he died only seven years ago. Music critics seem to idolize him, possibly because they sense a kindred spirit in the man who expressed such forthright opinions during his decade-and-a-half tenure at the New York *Herald Tribune*. He liked tossing off musical portraits (as he called them) of friends and acquaintances (even casual ones), of which more than a hundred and twenty-five, mostly for solo piano, accumulated over the years. On the whole, they are minor works in an œuvre that makes few claims to being major. Nonetheless, Thomson groupies won't want to pass up this marathon celebration, in which twenty-odd musicians perform all the composer's musical portraits, interspersed among readings from his prose works and screenings of films about him and his music. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 800-709-4321. Nov. 9 from 1 to 10.)

**Ensemble for Early Music**—Performing medieval music associated with the great European cathedrals. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 749-6600. Nov. 9 at 8 and Nov. 10 at 3.)

**Grieg Trio**—Performing piano trios by Beethoven and Schubert (in B-Flat Major). (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. Nov. 10 at 11 A.M. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

**Yefim Bronfman**—The pianist offers works by Schumann (his "Humoreske" and "Arabeske") and Prokofiev (his Sonatas No. 2 and No. 6). (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 10 at 2.)

**Moscow Conservatory Trio**—Playing both of Shostakovich's piano trios, as well as Beethoven's "Archduke." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Nov. 10 at 3.)

**Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center**—Presenting Haydn's Piano Trio in A-Flat Major, George Perle's Duos for Horn and String Quartet (featuring French hornist David Jolley and the Orion String Quartet), and Dvořák's String Quartet No. 13. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 10 at 5 and Nov. 12 at 7:30.)

*Iannis Xenakis's music, played by the ST-X Ensemble.*

ANDREA VENTURA

**Simon Keenlyside**—The début recording by this young English baritone (a recital of Schubert's songs) became a cult item when it was issued in Great Britain several years ago; eventually it showed up in America on the Classics for Pleasure label, and it's worth seeking out as an introduction to Keenlyside's well-trained instrument (though as an interpreter he has deepened since then). Now he is appearing all over, both on the most prestigious opera stages (including, as of this week, the Metropolitan) and in such all-star recordings as the brand-new "La Bohème" on EMI (where his fellow bohemians are tenor Roberto Alagna, baritone Thomas Hampson, and bass Samuel Ramey). In his New York début recital, he performs songs by Schubert, Wolf, Rachmaninoff, Rorem, and Poulenc. An added attraction is the assisting pianist, Malcolm Martineau, who seems to be emerging as the new crown prince in the succession of eminent English accompanists. (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. Nov. 11 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

**Iris Regev and Ilan Rechtman**—The wife-and-husband cello-and-piano team, performing works by Chopin and Mr. Rechtman. (Mansfield Hotel, 12 W. 44th St. Nov. 11 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

**ST-X Ensemble Xenakis USA**—The strangely named group continues its campaign on behalf of the experimental scores of Iannis Xenakis, performing his seventy-minute "Kraanerg," a protest against the Vietnam War composed in 1968. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. 996-1100. Nov. 12 at 8.)

## ABOVE AND BEYOND

**Poetry by the Case**—As you wander through "The Hand of the Poet: Part II," the remarkable collection of notes, letters, rough drafts, and manuscripts currently on display at the New York Public Library, it's hard to resist being caught up in the passions that stirred the fifty twentieth-century poets represented here. Writing on Jack Kerouac, Henry Miller offers this appreciation: "The good poet, or in this case the 'spontaneous Bop prosodist,' is always alive to the idiomatic lingo of his time." Frank O'Hara describes Kenneth Koch thus: "He has the other poetic gift: vivacity and go, originality of perception and intoxication with life." Charles Simic's grand summation of the art ("one great defect of poetry, or one of its sublime attractions—depending on your point of view—is that it wants to include everything") could just as fluidly describe the seductive effect of this exhibition. After you spend a few moments peering into these vitrines, even the visiting card that Elizabeth Bishop once sent to Howard Moss seems poetic: "Dear Howard: one shd. never attempt FLAN in an unfamiliar and very bad oven—so forgive me if these are full of the unforgivable holes . . ." (Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0571. Through Feb. 15.)

**Exterior Decoration**—"When you think of New York, you picture the skyline," the photographer Martha Cooper says. "But to get a good view of the skyscrapers you have to be in Jersey." Cooper, the director of photography at the New York folkways collective City Lore, is more interested in the way New Yorkers customize the parts of the buildings they do see, affixing bamboo or New England clapboards to street-level façades, carving "squeeze-between" shoe-repair shops out of slivers of space too small to be called alleys, adding jewelry stands to newspaper kiosks. Cooper catalogues such architectural inventions in her slide presentation "Manhattan Vernacular"; she even includes a one-room shingled cottage on the roof of the City Lore building, at First and 1st. "The guy who built it calls the place Upuponit," she says, "because all his friends have cottages in Sagaponack." (Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St. Nov. 7 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

**Readings**—Nov. 7 at 8: Poets Jayne Cortez, Joy Harjo, and Tracie Morris read from (and sing from) their work. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. Tickets at the door.) . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 7:30: Gary Snyder reads from his epic poem "Mountains and Rivers Without End." (Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Nov. 11 at 8: Playwrights David Hare and Wallace Shawn read from their work. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.) . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 7: Geoff Nicholson reads from his most recent novel, "Footsucker." (Shakespeare & Co., 939 Lexington Ave., at 69th St. No tickets necessary.)

**Talks**—Nov. 7 at 8:30 A.M.: Publisher Harold Evans hosts a breakfast chat about the writing of John O'Hara, with Louis Begley, Fran Lebowitz, and Gay Talese, among others. (Fred's, 10 E. 61st St. For reservations, call 940-7480.) . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 11 A.M. and 1 P.M.: Trumpeter Wynton Marsalis and pianist Danilo Perez explore, in spoken words and in song, the Latin influence on jazz. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050.)

**Walk**—Nov. 10 at 11 A.M.: Israel David Fishman of Big Knish Walking Tours visits the wig shops, kosher bakeries, and community centers of the Hungarian Satmar neighborhood in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. For reservations, call 718-633-2824.

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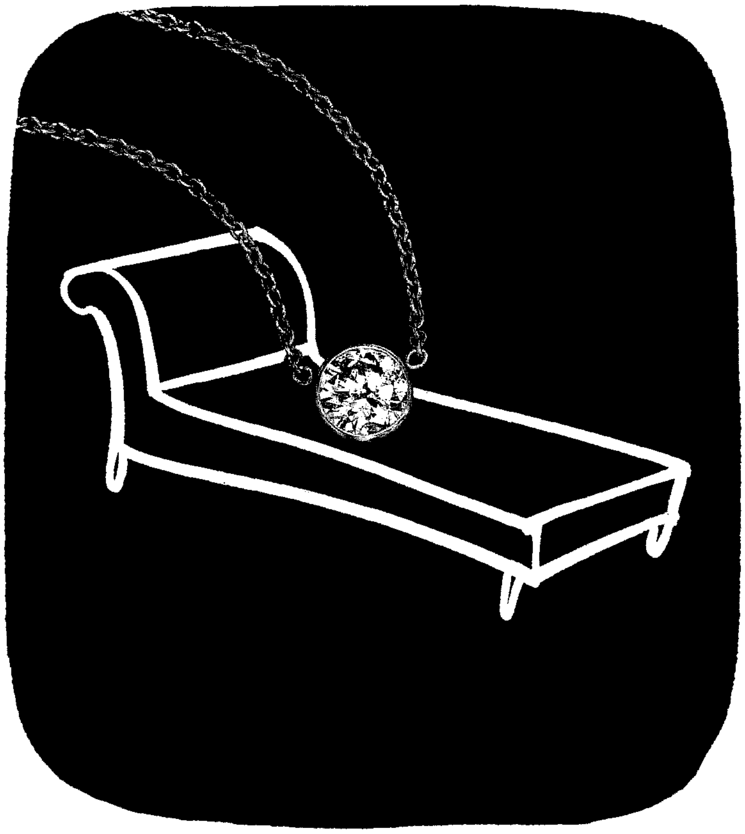

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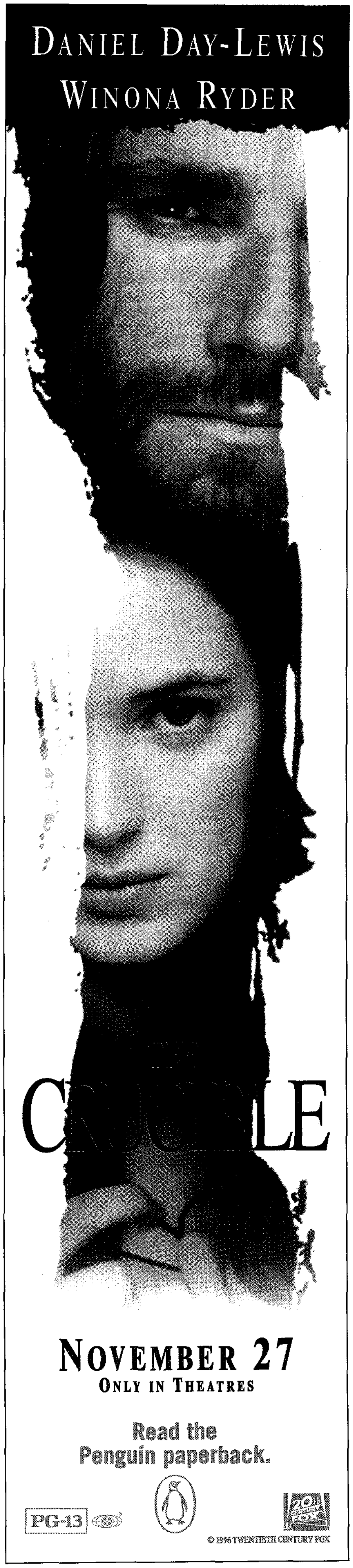
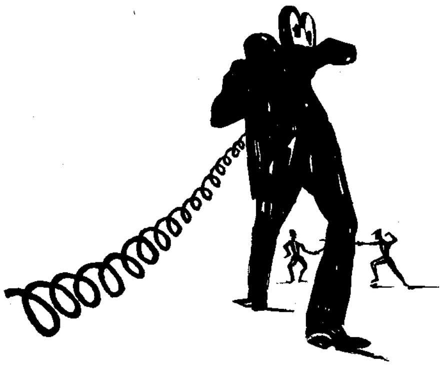


# THE MOVIES



## FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

**Breathing Room**—Director Jon Sherman's romantic comedy (which he co-wrote with Tom Hughes) about a New York City couple (Susan Floyd and Dan Futterman) who decide to spend some time apart. Opening Nov. 8.

**Champagne Safari**—A documentary by George Ungar about Charles Bedaux, a Franco-American millionaire who toured the Canadian North in style and later collaborated with the Nazis. Written by Steve Lucas, John Kramer, and Harold Crooks. Opening Nov. 8. (Cinema Village.)

**Everything Relative**—Six gay women who were college friends in the seventies reunite for a weekend, in a comedy/drama written and directed by Sharon Pollack. Opening Nov. 8. (Quad Cinema.)

**Hype!**—A documentary directed by Doug Pray, chronicling Seattle's early-nineties pop-music scene. Opening Nov. 8. (Village Theatre VII.)

**Joseph Conrad's The Secret Agent**—Bob Hoskins and Patricia Arquette star in Christopher Hampton's adaptation of Conrad's 1907 novel, about a plot to blow up the Greenwich Park observatory in London. With Gérard Depardieu. Opening Nov. 8.

**Mad Dog Time**—Richard Dreyfuss plays a Mafia boss fresh out of an insane asylum, in a black comedy written and directed by Larry Bishop. With Ellen Barkin, Gabriel Byrne, and Jeff Goldblum. Opening Nov. 8. (Baronet, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII.)

**Paris Was a Woman**—Greta Schiller's portrait of the female artists and intellectuals who gave nineteen-twenties Paris its flair. Written by Andrea Weiss. Opening Nov. 8. (Quad Cinema.)

**Ransom**—Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening Nov. 8. (86th Street East Twin, Embassy 1, Guild, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas.)

**Set It Off**—Jada Pinkett, Queen Latifah, Vivica A. Fox, and Kimberly Elise are Los Angeles bank robbers, in a thriller directed by F. Gary Gray. Written by Takashi Bufford and Kate Lanier. Opening Nov. 6. (Criterion Center.)

## CURRENT FILMS

*(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre information is listed on page 32.)*

**The Associate**—Whoopi Goldberg plays a financial analyst who takes on Wall Street with the help of an imaginary partner, in a comedy directed by Donald Petrie. With Tim Daly, Dianne Wiest, Bebe Neuwirth, and Eli Wallach. (Chelsea Cinemas, 86th Street East Twin, Gotham Cinema, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Village Theatre VII. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; through Nov. 7. . . . ¶ Embassy 3; starting Nov. 8.)

**Bad Moon**—After being bitten by a strange animal in the Himalayas, a photojournalist (Michael Pare) returns home to the States a changed man, in a thriller written and directed by Eric Red, from Wayne Smith's 1992 novel, "Thor." With Mariel Hemingway. (Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 34th Street Showplace, and Village East Cinemas.)

**Beautiful Thing**—An urban fairy tale, set in London, about first love between two sixteen-year-old boys (Glen Berry and Scott Neal). The movie is a mixed bag, but it has sweet performances and some wonderful moments; the director, Hettie Macdonald, films through rose-colored glasses that capture the humor and charm of the story but not the drama.—B.D. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

**Big Night**—The actor Stanley Tucci co-wrote (with Joseph Tropiano), co-directed (with Campbell Scott), and co-stars (with Tony Shalhoub) in this elegant, leisurely low-budget comedy about a struggling Italian restaurant run by a pair of immigrant brothers. The unusually happy, relaxed ensemble includes Ian Holm, Isabella Rossellini, Minnie Driver, Allison Janney, and Campbell Scott. The big set piece—a lavish dinner in honor of the singer-bandleader Louis Prima—is a fitting climax to the movie's patient accumulation of savory and blissfully pointless delights: a convincing illustration of how keen pleasure for pleasure's sake can be.—T.R. (9/23/96) (Angelika Film Center, 86th Street East Twin, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 19th Street East 6.)

**Bound**—An offbeat first feature directed by the brothers Larry and Andy Wachowski, about a mobster's girlfriend and a handywoman who team up to rip off the mob. Between the Wachowskis' technical skill (the wonderful camera work is by the rock-video director Bill Pope) and the all too convincing twists and turns of the plot, the characters might have easily gotten lost; but Jennifer Tilly, who plays the moll with a voice more breathless than Marilyn Monroe's, and Gina Gershon, the butch plumber with a Gene Tierney overbite, are a gorgeous couple, and their sexy, stylish repartee steals the film.—B.D. (Art Greenwich Twin and Chelsea Cinemas.)

**The Chamber**—Just a few months after this summer's senseless hit "A Time to Kill," another bloated John Grisham legal thriller gets the overblown, overacted Hollywood treatment. In this one, Chris O'Donnell stars as a vain young attorney determined to save his grandfather (Gene Hackman), a redneck K.K.K. murderer, from execution. While O'Donnell does his Tom Cruise best to appear serious and engaged, Hackman turns in one of his rare histrionic and unconvincing performances. James Foley's directorial style *demands* attention—the film flails all over the place in an attempt to appear tense and authoritative—but the plot never takes hold. This is generic made-for-TV fodder (racism is bad, it's wrong to take a life) dressed up like a smart, sassy lawyer: expensively.—B.D. (National Twin and Park & 86th Street Cinemas. . . . ¶ Baronet; through Nov. 7.)

**Dear God**—Greg Kinnear plays a con man who takes a job in the dead-letter department of the post office, in a comedy directed by Garry Marshall and written by Warren Leight and Ed Kaplan. (Art Greenwich Twin, East 85th Street, Lincoln Square, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, and State.)

**The First Wives Club**—Goldie Hawn, Bette Midler, and Diane Keaton, three of America's finest comic actresses, get together for the first time, and the best that Hollywood has to offer them is this loud empowerment comedy. The premise—old friends meet at a funeral and find that they have something in common: their husbands are leaving them for younger women—sounds like a fair taking-off point for some wicked comedy. But all that the scenarist, Robert Harling, can think of to follow it up with is a tepid revenge fantasy in which they bond and dole out justice to their cheating men. The director, Hugh Wilson, aims for harmless froth, and what he winds up with, as the hysteria level rises, is something brash and strident.—B.D. (Chelsea Cinemas, Embassy 4, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, 72nd Street East, and Village Theatre VII.)

**The Funeral**—Abel Ferrara directs Chris Penn, Christopher Walken, Vincent Gallo, Benicio Del Toro, Annabella Sciorra, and Isabella Rossellini in a drama about an Italian-American family in Depression-era New York. (Angelika Film Center and 84th Street Sixplex.)

**Get On the Bus**—Spike Lee rushed to get an homage to last year's Million Man March ready in time for the first anniversary of the event, and the result feels—well, "rushed" would be putting it mildly. The story follows a group of African-American men on a march-bound bus from Los Angeles to Washington. The obvious point is their diversity, but the only way that the screenwriter, Reggie Rock Bythewood, can think of to demonstrate it is with clichés (Ossie Davis playing his usual wise old codger) alongside anti-clichés (Isaiah Washington as a gay Gulf War veteran) that feel just as stereotyped.—S.K. (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

**The Ghost and the Darkness**—Michael Douglas, who produced, has hideously miscast himself as a great white hunter in director Stephen Hopkins's attempt at an African adventure. The screenplay, about two lions that have been devouring the African workers at a British bridge-building camp in late-nineteenth-century Kenya, was written by William Goldman in a style reminiscent of such great colonial trash epics of the fifties as "Elephant Walk" and "The Rains of Ranchipur." But all that Douglas can think of to do while the mystical declamation and the body count both soar is swagger around like Iron John. It doesn't help that he's teamed with Val Kilmer, who, as the bridge's chief architect, faces danger with an upper lip as stiff as Stewart Granger's. Mediocre camerawork and flashy editing combine to spoil any thrill of the hunt; the fake environment of "Jurassic Park" invited greater curiosity.—B.D. (Astor Plaza, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Village Theatre VII.)

**High School High**—An idealistic young teacher (Jon Lovitz) takes a job at an inner-city D.C. school, in a comedy directed by Hart Bochner. Written by David Zucker and Robert LoCash. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Gemini, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

**Jude**—An adaptation of Thomas Hardy's "Jude the Obscure," written by Hossein Amini and directed by Michael Winterbottom, with Christopher Eccleston in the title role. The movie is remarkably true to the darkness and chafing disgust of the novel, and that fidelity is where the problem lies. Jude, the stonemason who dreams of becoming a scholar, is mired in failure from the start; even as you respect the picture for its earth-toned palette and its bestial pain, you know that any dramatic momentum will lead nowhere. There is much to admire here, almost nothing to enjoy. Also starring Kate Winslet.—A.L. (62nd & Broadway.)

**Larger Than Life**—A comedy written by Roy Blount, Jr., and directed by Howard Franklin, featuring Bill Murray and a four-ton elephant on a cross-country trip. With Janeane Garofalo and Matthew McConaughey. (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Olympia, Orpheum VII, and Waverly.)

**The Long Kiss Goodnight**—After the disaster of "Cutthroat Island," Geena Davis and her husband, director Renny Harlin, have teamed up again for what they intend as a coolly slam-bang action movie, but it's a leaden affair. Davis plays an amnesiac schoolteacher who gradually realizes that she's been trained as a spy; she is partnered by the ever reliable Samuel L. Jackson, who, as a private eye, gives the dumb proceedings some badly needed playfulness.—B.D. (Cinema 3rd Avenue, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

**Looking for Richard**—A movie that combines filmed segments of "Richard III" with a documentary about their making. Directed by and starring Al Pacino, who co-wrote the narration with Frederic Kimball. Pacino, Alec Baldwin, Kevin Spacey, and Winona Rider are in the cast of the play; in addition, there are interviews with Kenneth Branagh, John Gielgud, Vanessa Redgrave, and others. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

**Mercy**—A New York City lawyer (John Rubinstein) tries to save his daughter (Rhea Silver Smith) from kidnappers, in a thriller written and directed by Richard Shepard. (Village East Cinemas.)

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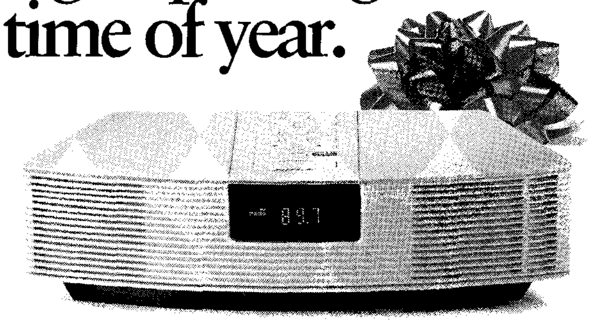

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**Michael Collins**—The short life and lasting legend of the Irish freedom fighter Michael Collins (1890-1922), compressed into a vigorous movie by the writer and director Neil Jordan. Liam Neeson gives a hefty performance as the hero, but the film takes too much care insuring that we like and admire him, cooling the figure's hot temper and ignoring any sins of the flesh (let alone of the spirit) which he committed—he remains devoted to Kitty Kiernan (Julia Roberts). The strength of the movie resides mainly in the work of its cameraman, Chris Menges, who delivers a barrage of images as rousing and changeable as the fortunes of Collins himself. With Aidan Quinn, Stephen Rea, Alan Rickman, and Charles Dance.—A.L. (10/14/96) (Beekman, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, and Village East Cinemas.)

**Microcosmos**—A revelatory documentary about insects. The directors, Claude Nuridsany and Marie Pérennou, who were trained as biologists, spent years designing cameras that would capture spiders, butterflies, beetles, and bees in their habitats as never before. There are no voice-overs, just closeups of bugs; a few sequences surpass the most horrific science fiction, but a surprising number of the creatures are quite cute. The inventive, funny-ethereal score is by Bruno Coulais.—S.K. (Film Forum 3.)

**Mother Night**—Keith Gordon's adaptation of an early (1961) Kurt Vonnegut novel is always engrossing but never especially persuasive. The hero is a forlorn man named Howard W. Campbell, Jr. (Nick Nolte)—an American writer, living in Germany in the thirties, who is recruited to spy for American intelligence. His wartime reports are encoded in weekly propaganda broadcasts, in which he smoothly explicates the anti-Semitic policies of the Third Reich; after the war, he goes into hiding and broods over the possibility that his broadcasts may have done more harm than good. The story attempts to investigate the paradox of acting, but Vonnegut's theme—"We are what we pretend to be"—gets muddled in the movie, in part through the miscasting of the central role. Although Nolte gives a fine, intelligent performance, he's too straightforward an actor to convey the slipperiness of a man-without-qualities figure like Campbell. Also with Alan Arkin, Sheryl Lee, and John Goodman.—T.R. (11/4/96) (Cinema I and Village East Cinemas.)

**Normal Life**—John McNaughton's drama about a young couple (Ashley Judd and Luke Perry) who take up bank robbery to finance the middle-class life style they knew as children. Written by Peg Haller and Bob Schneider. (Quad Cinema.)

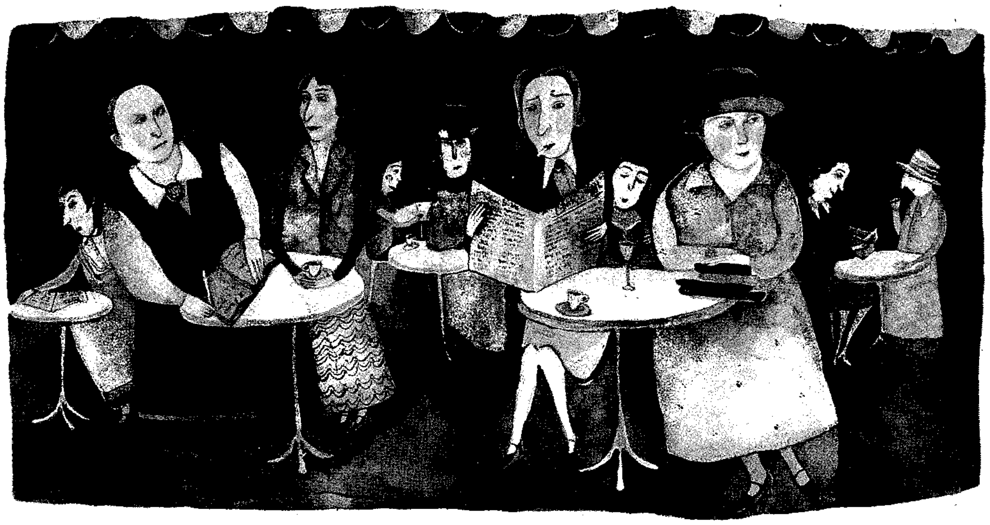
**Palookaville**—Three friends (Adam Trese, Vincent Gallo, and William Forsythe) try to escape their small-town lives by turning to crime, in a comedy directed by Alan Taylor. Written by David Epstein. (Carnegie Hall Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

**The Proprietor**—Jeanne Moreau has the role of a French writer who, after three decades in New York, decides to return to Paris, in a drama directed by Ismail Merchant. With Austin Pendleton, Nell Carter, and Pierre Vaneck. Written by Jean-Marie Besset and George Trow. (Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

**Secrets & Lies**—Hortense (Marianne Jean-Baptiste), the heroine of Mike Leigh's broadest and most ambitious film to date, decides after the death of her adoptive mother to seek her biological one. The quest turns up Cynthia (Brenda Blethyn), who freaks out: Hortense is middle-class and black, Cynthia working-class and white. Jean-Baptiste gives a quiet, pacific performance; Blethyn deals in spasms of exaggeration which belong in another film altogether. Still, there is a fine supporting cast, and they all gather in the final scene, a cathartic barbecue that starts off as nicely choreographed light comedy and darkens to a Bergman-like chorus of wailing women and slightly overcooked dialogue.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center, Eastside Playhouse, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 19th Street East 6.)

**A Single Girl**—Benoît Jacquot's delicate exercise in neo-Nouvelle Vague follows Valérie (the incredibly poised Virginie Ledoyen), a tough young Parisienne, in real time as she tells her boyfriend (Benoît Magimel) that she's pregnant, bickers with him, and then reports for her first day of work delivering room service at a fancy hotel. The cinéma-vérité approach actually seems a bit old-fashioned, a leftover from the days when film technique could revolutionize the way we looked at daily life. Ledoyen, though, makes the girlishly pretty but strong and angry character of Valérie feel like something new. Jacquot toys with simplistic explanations for her hurt—her father deserted her mother, the men at the hotel all want to sleep with her and the women are jealous; what depth the movie has comes entirely from Ledoyen's unexplained silences and her enigmatic eyes. Written by Jacquot and Jérôme Beaujour. In French.—S.K. (Film Forum; through Nov. 12.)

**Sleepers**—Barry Levinson's movie is a doggedly faithful adaptation of Lorenzo Carcaterra's 1995 best-seller, which purported to be a memoir of the author's youth in Hell's Kitchen, his horrifying experiences in an upstate reformatory, and his participation, years later, in an elaborate scheme to avenge the abuses that he and his friends suffered at the hands of the reform school's sadistic guards. The book quickly aroused suspicion that it was a hoax, and the film does nothing to dispel the aura of fishiness. Under Levinson's scrupulous, unimaginative direction, the picture plays as a thoroughly old-fashioned Hollywood crime melodrama, loaded with tough-guy clichés and constructed, very neatly, in three distinct acts. Most viewers have no trouble believing that truth is stranger than fiction: the problem with this "true" story is that it's *exactly* as strange as fiction, and in exactly the same way. With Jason Patric, Brad Pitt, Robert De Niro, Kevin Bacon, Minnie Driver, Vittorio Gassman, Frank Medrano, and Dustin Hoffman.—T.R. (11/4/96) (Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)


*Opening November 8, Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas, Janet Flanner, and Adrienne Monnier in Greta Schiller's documentary "Paris Was a Woman."*

GISELLE POTTER

**Stephen King's Thinner**—An overweight attorney (Robert John Burke) falls under a Gypsy's curse and begins losing weight, in a film directed by Tom Holland and written by Michael McDowell, from the 1984 novel by King (writing as Richard Bachman). (Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 2, First & 62nd Cinemas, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Showplace, and Waverly. . . . ¶ Embassy 3; through Nov. 7.)

**Surviving Picasso**—A refreshingly dry, offbeat treatment, written by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and directed by James Ivory, of the mid-century love affair between Pablo Picasso (Anthony Hopkins) and Françoise Gilot (Natascha McElhone). McElhone's amazingly wooden performance actually works for Gilot: she's too cold and introverted to be a victim for long. Hopkins doesn't exactly play it for sympathy, either, but at least his hypocritical, sublimely manipulative Picasso evens the match.—S.K. (Paris and Village Theatre VII.)

**Swingers**—A funny, boys-on-the-town ode to friendship and cruising for girls. The writer, Jon Favreau, co-stars with Vince Vaughn, a handsome new actor, and they're hilarious—but the film isn't a bubbleheaded comedy. The director, Doug Liman, follows his characters through swinging-singles hangouts from Hollywood to Vegas with a neon-soaked camera; beneath all the hip talk and the funny predicaments, his two heroes are wistful, stargazing romantics.—B.D. (Angelika Film Center, Cinema II, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

**Three Lives and Only One Death**—Marcello Mastroianni stars as an errant husband, a Sorbonne professor, a butler, and a businessman, in four witty vignettes. The director, Raúl Ruíz, has an avant-gardist reputation, but he obviously loves the corny enchantment of old-fashioned storytelling. The surprise is that the picture improves whenever Mastroianni is out of it—his charisma and radiance are too strong. In French (though it's one of the Chilean-born Ruíz's jokes that almost everyone is foreign and speaks with an accent).—S.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

**To Gillian on Her 37th Birthday**—Peter Gallagher plays a widower and Claire Danes his daughter, in David E. Kelley's adaptation of the 1983 play by Michael Brady. With Michelle Pfeiffer. Directed by Michael Pressman. (Gemini and Village East Cinemas.)

**Trees Lounge**—One of the stars of independent film, Steve Buscemi, now gets to write, direct, and star in his own project, an aimless and amiable look into the lives of people who gather inside a Long Island bar. The movie suggests John Cassavetes minus the hysteria—there are no epiphanies. Buscemi's simply drawn characters, who accept their fates with little fuss, are actors' dreams; Mark Boone Junior as a bored and irritable married friend, and Chloe Sevigny, as a sexy teen-ager, are particularly good. As a screwed-up sot, Buscemi moves in an inebriated haze, but his writing and direction are exceptionally clear-headed.—B.D. (Village Theatre VII.)

**Twelfth Night**—Trevor Nunn's version of Shakespeare's comedy, featuring Helena Bonham Carter, Richard E. Grant, Nigel Hawthorne, and Ben Kingsley. (Regency, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas.)

**Unhook the Stars**—A drama co-written (with Helen Caldwell) and directed by Nick Cassavetes, starring Gena Rowlands as a suburban widow whose children have grown up and left home. With Marisa Tomei and Gérard Depardieu. (Lincoln Square and 68th St. Playhouse.)

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INSTRUMENTS
FOR PROFESSIONALS

**William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet**—Leonardo DiCaprio represents the Montagues and Claire Danes the Capulets in Baz Luhrmann's version of the tragedy. With John Leguizamo, Paul Sorvino, and Brian Dennehy. (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet, Lincoln Square, National Twin, Orpheum VII, and 34th St. East.)

## ALSO PLAYING

**ACROSS THE SEA OF TIME:** Lincoln Square. . . . **BASQUIAT** (reviewed in our issue of 8/19/96): Angelika 57 and The Screening Room. . . . **BULLETPROOF:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **EMMA** (8/5/96): Cinema 3. . . . **THE FAN:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE GRASS HARP:** Sutton. . . . **INDEPENDENCE DAY** (7/15/96): Manhattan Twin and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **JOHN CARPENTER'S ESCAPE FROM L.A.:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **LONE STAR** (7/8/96): Guild. . . . **SHE'S THE ONE** (9/9/96): 59th Street East Cinema and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **A TIME TO KILL** (7/29/96): Manhattan Twin and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **TRAINSPOTTING** (7/22/96): The Screening Room.

## THEATRE ADDRESSES

*(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)*

**Angelika 57,** 225 W. 57th St.
**Angelika Film Center,** 18 W. Houston St.
**Art Greenwich Twin,** Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
**Astor Plaza,** 44th St. at Broadway.
**Baronet,** Third Ave. at 59th St.
**Beekman,** Second Ave. at 66th St.
**Carnegie Hall Cinemas,** Seventh Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
**Chelsea Cinemas,** 260 W. 23rd St.
**Cinema I,** Third Ave. at 60th St.
**Cinema II,** Third Ave. at 60th St.
**Cinema 3rd Avenue,** Third Ave. at 60th St.
**Cinema 3,** 2 W. 59th St.
**Cinema Village,** 22 E. 12th St.
**Coronet,** Third Ave. at 59th St.
**Criterion Center,** Broadway at 44th St.
**East 85th Street,** First Ave. at 85th St.
**Eastside Playhouse,** Third Ave. at 55th St.
**84th Street Sixplex,** Broadway at 84th St.
**86th Street East Twin,** Third Ave. at 86th St.
**Embassy I,** Broadway at 46th St.
**Embassy 2, 3, and 4,** Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
**59th Street East Cinema,** 239 E. 59th St.
**Film Forum,** W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
**First & 62nd Cinemas,** 400 E. 62nd St.
**Gemini,** Second Ave. at 64th St.
**Gotham Cinema,** Third Ave. at 58th St.
**Guild,** 33 W. 50th St.
**Lincoln Plaza Cinemas,** Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
**Lincoln Square,** Broadway at 68th St.
**Manhattan Twin,** Third Ave. at 59th St.
**Metro Cinema I and 2,** Broadway at 99th St.
**Murray Hill Cinemas,** 160 E. 34th St.
**National Twin,** Broadway at 44th St.
**New York Twin,** Second Ave. at 67th St.
**19th Street East 6,** Broadway at 19th St.
**Olympia I and II,** Broadway at 107th St.
**Orpheum VII,** Third Ave. at 86th St.
**Paris,** 4 W. 58th St.
**Park & 86th Street Cinemas,** 125 E. 86th St.
**Quad Cinema,** 34 W. 13th St.
**Regency,** Broadway at 67th St.
**The Screening Room,** 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
**62nd & Broadway,** 62 W. 62nd St.
**68th St. Playhouse,** Third Ave. at 68th St.
**72nd Street East,** Third Ave. at 71st St.
**State,** Broadway at 45th St.
**Sutton I and 2,** Third Ave. at 57th St.
**23rd St. West Triplex,** 333 W. 23rd St.
**34th St. East,** 241 E. 34th St.
**34th Street Showplace,** 238 E. 34th St.
**Village East Cinemas,** Second Ave. at 12th St.
**Village Theatre VII,** Third Ave. at 11th St.
**Waverly I and 2,** Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
**Worldwide Cinemas,** 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
**Ziegfeld,** 141 W. 54th St.

## REVIVALS

*(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)*

**The Garden of the Finzi-Continis** (1970)—Vittorio De Sica's lyric evocation of a vanished group of people (the cultivated, aristocratic Jewish-Italian landowners) and a vanished mood. Based on Giorgio Bassani's semiautobiographical novel, the film records how Giorgio, a middle-class outsider (Lino Capolicchio), is drawn into the decaying, enchanted world of the Finzi-Continis by the imperious, contrary Micòl (Dominique Sanda); she and her languid brother (Helmut Berger) are spoiled, beautiful people without the will to save themselves. This extraordinary film, with its melancholy glamour, is perhaps the only one that records the half-hearted anti-Jewish measures of the Mussolini period—which were, however, sufficient to wipe out the Finzi-Continis and all they represented. In Italian.—P.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; starting Nov. 8.)

**Ladies in Retirement** (1941)—An entertainingly hokey murder chiller on the stage, but not very successfully adapted to the screen. With Charles Vidor directing, this lonely-rural-cottage gothic seems to take itself too seriously, as if it were really a psychological study. Ida Lupino works hard as a severe, plain-faced murderess, Isobel Elsom sips her wine and nibbles her bonbons as the woman who innocently befriends her, and Elsa Lanchester and Edith Barrett are Lupino's loony sisters, who stuff their neat rooms with their collections of crows' feathers, dead birds, and underbrush. From the play by Reginald Denham and Edward Percy; with Louis Hayward.—P.K. (American Museum of the Moving Image; Nov. 10.)

**Mamma Roma** (1962)—In Pier Paolo Pasolini's overconceptualized second film, Anna Magnani (who else?) plays Mamma Roma, a prostitute with a heart as big, and goals as confused, as the whole Eternal City. She goes legit by selling vegetables from a cart and takes custody of her weak-willed teen-age boy (who doesn't know about her shady past), but the demands of her former lover/pimp keep landing her back in the life. Pasolini both admires and questions the woman's determination to push her child into the middle class. She puts her street smarts at the service of false values; at one point, she even engineers a blackmail scheme to get him a waiter's job in a flourishing restaurant. Pasolini's Marxist-Catholic imagery reaches its heavy-handed nadir when, in prison, the son is strapped to the *letto di contenzione* ("punishment bed"). As photographed by the great Tonino Delli Colli, it makes for one fancy crucifixion. In Italian.—M.S. (Symphony Space; Nov. 12.)

**Vertigo** (1958)—The new print of the ultimate cult movie—Hitchcock's voluptuous exploration of *l'amour fou*—gives the original musical tracks a state-of-the-art presentation that extracts previously hidden undertones and highlights from Bernard Herrmann's brilliant score. With soaring visual eloquence, Hitchcock takes voyeurism and amorous fixation to audacious, almost necrophiliac lengths in this tale of a retired San Francisco police detective (James Stewart) investigating an acquaintance's wife (Kim Novak) to find out whether she is spiritually possessed. Despite its misshapen form, the movie is hypnotic and gloriously operatic—not a conventional masterpiece but an auteur classic, flooded with the Master's erotic and moral obsessions. Alec Coppel and Samuel Taylor wrote the script, from the novel "D'Entre les Morts," by Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac. The movie, too, has been revived from death, thanks to the restoration team of Robert A. Harris and James C. Katz, who have given it a clarity and lustre that it's lacked for thirty-eight years.—M.S. (Ziegfeld.)

## LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

*(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)*

**Film Forum 2,** W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through Nov. 7: "North by Northwest" (1959, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, and James Mason. . . . ¶ Films directed by Marco Ferreri; in Italian, with English subtitles. Nov. 8-10: "La Grande Bouffe" (1973). . . . Nov. 12: "Diary of a Maniac" (1993). . . . ¶ Nov. 11: "Classified" (1925, Alfred Santell; silent) and "Is Life Worth Living?" (1921, Alan Crosland; silent).

**MUSEUM OF MODERN ART,** Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films written by, directed by, starring, or about Jean-Pierre Melville; all in French, with English subtitles. Nov. 7 at 2:30 and Nov. 8 at 6: "Quand Tu Liras Cette Lettre" (1953). . . . Nov. 8 at 2:30: "Magnet of Doom" (1962), with Jean-Paul Belmondo, Charles Vanel, and Stefania Sandrelli. . . . Nov. 8 at 8: "Léon Morin, Priest" (1961), with Belmondo, Emmanuèle Riva, and Irène Tunc. . . . Nov. 9 at 2 and Nov. 12 at 2:30: "Second Breath" (1966), with Lino Ventura, Paul Meurisse, and Raymond Pellegrin. . . . Nov. 9 at 5: "Bob le Flambeur" (1955). . . . Nov. 10 at 2: "The Godson" (1967), with Alain Delon, Nathalie Delon, and François Périer. . . . Nov. 10 at 5 and Nov. 11 at 2:30: "The Red Circle" (1970), with Alain Delon, Yves Montand, and Gian-Maria Volonté. . . . Nov. 11 at 6: "Breathless" (1959, Jean-Luc Godard), with Melville, Belmondo, and Jean Seberg. . . . Nov. 12 at 6: "Dirty Money" (1972), with Alain Delon, Catherine Deneuve, and Richard Crenna. . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 3 and 6: "Prisoners of War" (1995, Gervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi), a documentary. . . . ¶ Nov. 9-10 at 2:30 and 5, Nov. 11 at 3, and Nov. 12 at 3 and 6: Two programs of short films made between 1992 and 1996 by students at the Sam Spiegel Film and Television School in Israel. . . . ¶ Nov. 11 at 6:30: "Tender Fictions" (1995), directed by Barbara Hammer, who will be present.

**WALTER READE THEATRE,** Lincoln Center (875-5600)—A program of films from Arab countries. Nov. 6 at 2 and 6:15: "Nah'la" (1979, Farouk Beloufa; Algeria). . . . Nov. 6 at 4 and 8:30: "Stars in Broad Daylight" (1988, Usama Muhammad; Syria). . . . Nov. 7 at 2 and 6:15: "Kit Kat" (1991, Daoud Abd al-Sayyid; Egypt). . . . Nov. 7 at 4:15: "Omar Gatlato" (1977, Merzak Allouche; Algeria). . . . Nov. 8 at 2 and Nov. 10 at 3:45: "Chronicle of the Years of Embers" (1975, Muhammad Lakhdar-Hamina; Algeria). . . . Nov. 8 at 5:45 and 9:50 and Nov. 10 at 7: "The Cruel Sea" (1971, Khalid Siddiq; Kuwait). . . . Nov. 8 at 7:45 and Nov. 9 at 3:45: "Night of Counting the Years" (1975, Shadi Abdel Salaam; Egypt). . . . Nov. 9 at 5:45 and Nov. 12 at 2: "Little Wars" (1981, Maroun Baghdadi; Lebanon). . . . Nov. 9 at 8 and Nov. 12 at 4: "City Dreams" (1983, Muhammad Malas; Syria). . . . Nov. 10 at 9: "Badis" (1989, Ahd al-Rahman al-Tazi; Morocco). . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 8:30: "Chamane" (1995, Bartabas; Russia and France). . . . ¶ Weekend showings for children. Nov. 9-10 at 2: "The Terror of Mechagodzilla" (1975, Inoshiro Honda).

**FLORENCE GOULD HALL,** 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—A program of films starring Charles Aznavour. Nov. 12 at 12:30 and 6:30: "Shoot the Piano Player" (1960, François Truffaut; in French). . . . Nov. 12 at 3:30 and 9: "Games" (1967, Curtis Harrington).

**AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE,** 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—A program of films directed by, or starring, Ida Lupino. Nov. 9 at 2: "Never Fear" (1950). . . . Nov. 9 at 4: "Deep Valley" (1947, Jean Negulesco). . . . Nov. 10 at 2: "Outrage" (1950). . . . Nov. 10 at 3:30: "On Dangerous Ground" (1951, Nicholas Ray). . . . Nov. 10 at 5:30: "Ladies in Retirement" (†).

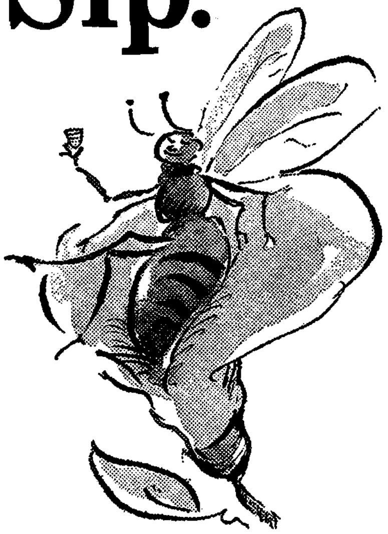
**SYMPHONY SPACE,** Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—Nov. 12 at 7: "Chinatown" (1974, Roman Polanski), with Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, and John Huston. . . . Nov. 12 at 9:30: "Mamma Roma" (†).

**A DIFFERENT LIGHT BOOKSTORE,** 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Nov. 10 at 7, the feature will be "Marnie" (1964, Alfred Hitchcock).

**ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES,** 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—Films by Krzysztof Kieślowski. Nov. 6 at 6: "Camera Buff" (1980). . . . Nov. 7-8 at 6: "Blue" (1993). . . . Nov. 9 at 6: "White" (1993). . . . Nov. 10 at 6: "Red" (1994). . . . ¶ Nov. 6 at 7:30 and 9: "Wings of Desire" (1987, Wim Wenders; in German). . . . ¶ A program of films by Nagisa Ishima; all in Japanese, with English subtitles. Nov. 6 at 8: "Death by Hanging" (1968). . . . Nov. 7 at 8: "Cruel Story of Youth" (1960). . . . ¶ Nov. 6-7 at 10: "Pulp Fiction" (1994, Quentin Tarantino). . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 7: "The Travelling Players" (1975, Theo Angelopoulos; in Greek). . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 8: "Entr'acte" (1924, René Clair and Francis Picabia), "Un Chien Andalou" (1928, Luis Buñuel), and "Land Without Bread" (1932, Buñuel). . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 8, Nov. 9-10 at 4 and 8, and Nov. 11-12 at 8: A program of short films by African-American filmmakers. . . . ¶ Nov. 8-12 at 10: "Saturday Night Fever" (1978, John Badham). . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 7: Films by Ernie Gehr. . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 8:30: "L'Age d'Or" (1930, Buñuel and Salvador Dali). . . . ¶ Nov. 10 at 5: "Songs 1-22" (1965, Stan Brakhage). . . . ¶ Nov. 10 at 8: Films by Jean Cocteau and Maya Deren. . . . ¶ Nov. 11 at 5: "Edvard Munch" (1976, Peter Watkins). . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 5:30: "Van Gogh" (1992, Maurice Pialat). . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 6 and 9: "Rocco and His Brothers" (1960, Luchino Visconti; in Italian).

*Opening November 8 at the Lincoln Plaza, "The Garden of the Finzi-Continis."*

JEAN-CLAUDE GÖTTING



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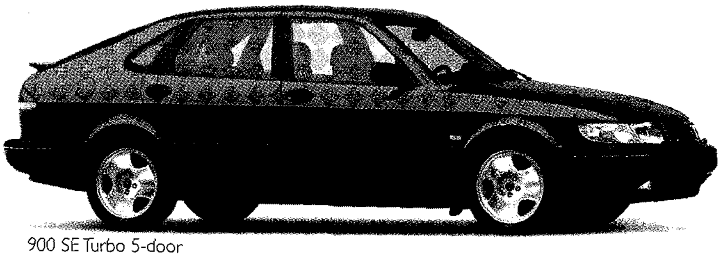

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# THE NEW YORKER

# THE TALK OF THE TOWN

## CONCESSION STAND

*Here comes election night, which means victory night, which means defeat night, which means concession-speech night. A scribe whose electoral memory stretches back forty-plus years examines the art of Presidential losing:*

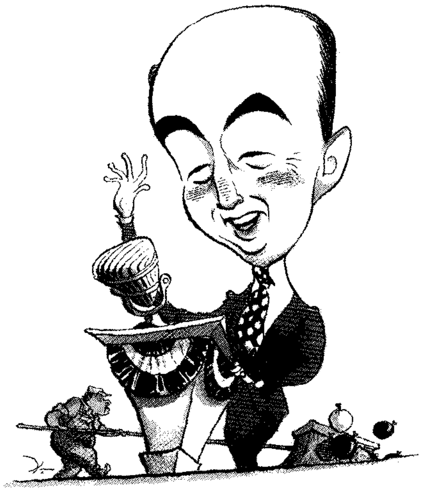
AT least since 1952, the elements of the concession speech have been tolerably consistent. They include, in roughly this order: (1) a manful, rueful acknowledgment of the pain of defeat; (2) a message of congratulations to the victor, often in the form of the reading of a telegram or the recounting of a telephone conversation; (3) a pledge, sometimes made over the shouted protests of the audience, to close ranks behind the people's choice; (4) thank-yous to wife, children, and supporters; (5) praise for the political system; (6) an assertion that what unites us as Americans is more important than what divides us; (7) a pledge to carry on the cause to which the campaign was allegedly devoted; and (8) a bit of concluding graciousness and/or ruefulness, preferably including a quotation, preferably from Lincoln. Not every concession speech contains every element, of course, and Elements 6 and 7 sit uncomfortably with each other. If a speech has both, one tends to be expressed feebly.

Concession speeches, like so much else in the election process, have been in decline over the past couple of generations. The most beautiful loser was Adlai E. Stevenson. His 1952 concession to Dwight D. Eisenhower was perfection itself. It began with a nobly phrased Element 3: "My fellow-citizens have made their choice and have selected General Eisenhower and the Republican Party as the instruments of their will for the next four years. The people have rendered their verdict and I gladly accept it." After similarly graceful Elements 4, 5, and 6 (there was no Element 7), Stevenson departed from his prepared text to conclude with an Element 8 that became an instant classic and has been imitated many times since:

> Someone asked me, as I came in, down on the street, how I felt, and I was reminded of a story that a fellow-townsman of ours used to tell—Abraham Lincoln. They asked him how he felt once after an unsuccessful election. He said he felt like a little boy who had stubbed his toe in the dark. He said that he was too old to cry but it hurt too much to laugh.

The concession that Stevenson delivered the second time Ike handed him his head, in 1956, was almost as good. It, too, skipped Element 7, and featured this wonderfully eloquent Element 5:

> To you who are disappointed tonight, let me confess that I am, too. But we must not be downhearted, for there is radiance and glory in the darkness could we but see, and to see we have only to look.
>
> For here in America the people have made their choice in a vigorous partisan contest that has affirmed again the vitality of the democratic process. And I say God bless partisanship, for this is democracy's lifeblood.
>
> But bear in mind that beyond the scene, in much of the world—in Russia, in China, in Hungary and all of the trembling satellites—partisan controversy is forbidden and dissent suppressed.
>
> So I say to you—all of you, everywhere, my dear and loyal friends—take heart. There are things more precious than political victory. There is the right to political contests. And who knows best how vigorous and alive it is than you who bear the fresh and the painful wounds of the battle?



*Stevenson: beautiful loser*

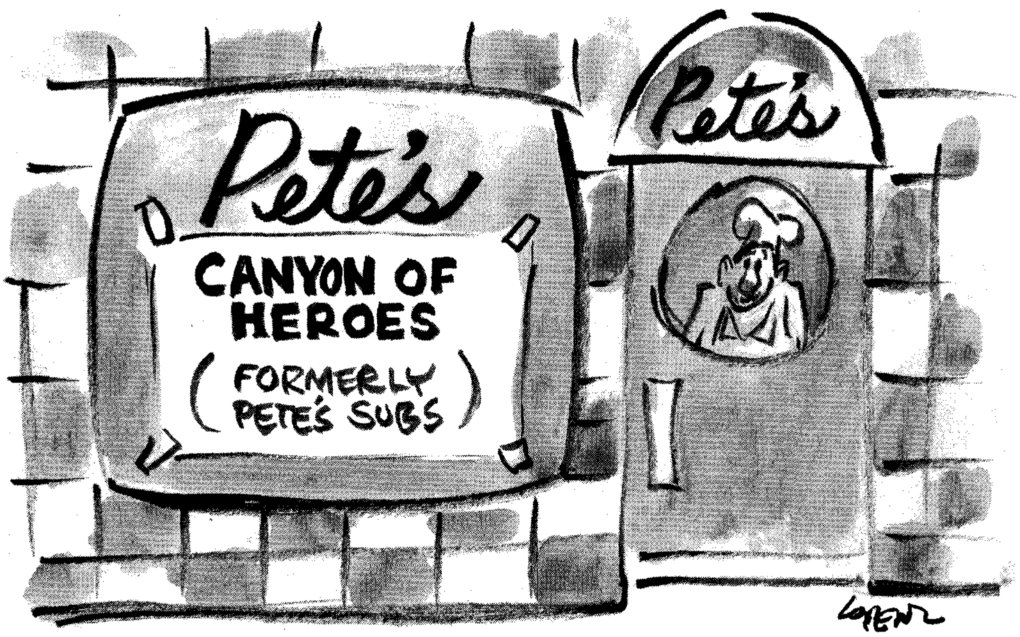
Things go downhill from then on. Here is Richard Nixon's 1960 rendering of Element 5:

> And while the—and I—please, please, just a minute—and I—as I look at the board here, while there are still some results still to come in—if the present trend continues, Mr.—Senator Kennedy will be the next President of the United States.
>
> I want to say that one of the great features of America is that we have political contests, that they are very hard fought as this one is hard fought and once the decision is made we unite behind the man who is elected.

The sentiments were like Adlai's, but the writing needed work. In 1964, Barry Goldwater stressed Element 7, saying that the conservative cause "turns out to be a much longer effort than we thought," and adding, "It's not an effort that we can drop now, nor do we have any intentions of dropping it now." Hubert Humphrey, in his 1968 concession to Nixon, urged his supporters to "go have some fun"—a characteristically Humphreyish expression of the politics of joy, but one that sounded macabre against that year's background of war, assassination, and riot. Humphrey's speech petered out into a wan Element 8: "I never had any doubt but what it would be a close fight, *comme ci, comme ça*, you know, one way—it bounced a little one way, it bounced a little another." In 1972, George McGovern quoted Stevenson quoting Lincoln. In 1976, Gerald Ford had laryngitis; his wife, Betty, did most of the talking.

Jimmy Carter's 1980 concession was notable mostly for the fact that he made the mistake of delivering it hours before the polls closed out West. Carter's talk had all eight elements, beginning with a tart Element 1: "The people of the United States have made their choice, and of course I ac-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL WITTE



cept that decision—but, I have to admit, not with the same enthusiasm that I accepted the decision four years ago." Walter Mondale, in 1984, was at once mournful and combative. "Let us fight on," his Element 7 began. "Tonight, tonight especially, I think of the poor, the unemployed, the elderly, the handicapped, the helpless, and the sad."

In 1988, Michael Dukakis was wistful ("We had a lot of good days, didn't we?"); four years later, the man who gave him one of his not so good days, George Bush, was subdued and gracious. His best line, an Element 8, echoed the Master. Stevenson, '56: "If I lost an election, I won a grandchild." Bush, '92: "I plan to get very active in the grandfather business."

The concession highlight of 1992, however, came from the third candidate. After a speech that, as the *Times* reported, "left the door open to a future race for the Presidency," Ross Perot switched to body English. Cackling wildly, he swept his wife into his arms and danced to a deafening recording of Patsy Cline's "Crazy." The Texas eccentric will find that sublime moment hard to top. It's difficult to picture the Kansas stoic even trying.

## SCHWARZKOGLER'S EAR

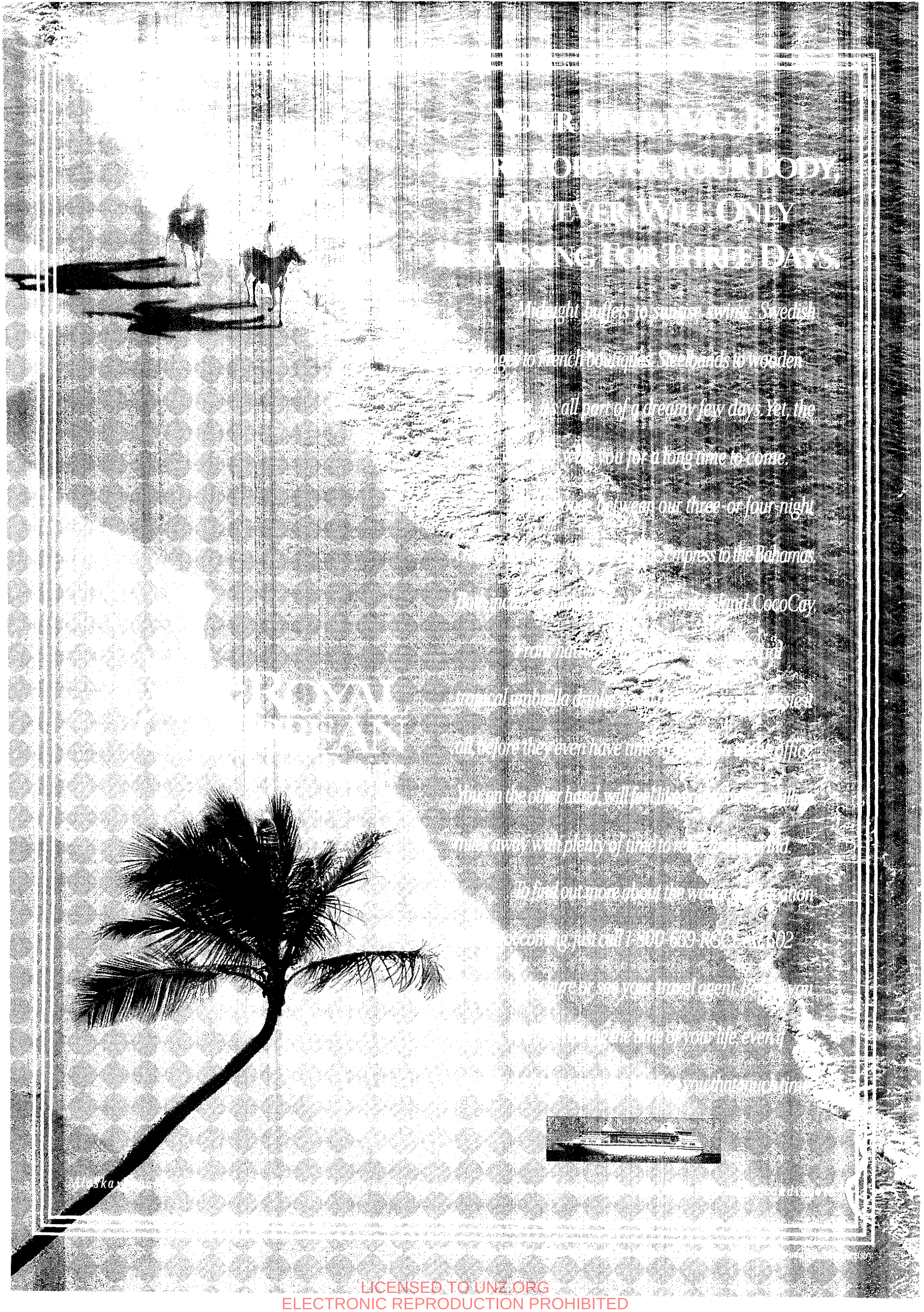
WITH an exhibition devoted to a deceased Viennese performance artist named Rudolf Schwarzkogler opening at the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum, in Washington, this week, Robert Hughes, the art critic of *Time*, is feeling rather queasy. In 1972, Hughes published an essay in *Time* on the decline of the avant-garde. Having seen reproductions of a grisly group of black-and-white photographs by Schwarzkogler, in which a man appears to have sliced one or more pieces off his bandaged genitals, Hughes with characteristic flair dubbed Schwarzkogler "the Vincent van Gogh of body art," for having "proceeded, inch by inch, to amputate his own penis, while a photographer recorded the act as an art event." The article asserted that these "acts of self-amputation finally did Schwarzkogler in," and that "he died, a martyr to his art."

Hughes's account quickly attained the status of historical fact and was echoed, virtually verbatim, in such influential books as Henry Sayre's "The Object of Performance," published in 1989, which discussed Schwarzkogler's "piece by piece amputation of his own penis." Then, in November of 1990, the art historian Kristine Stiles, writing in *Arts Magazine*, accused Sayre of having repeated "a complete fabrication, a journalistic fiction, first circulated by Robert Hughes." Basing her charge on interviews with members of Schwarzkogler's circle, she revealed that the man in the photographs was not in fact Schwarzkogler but, rather, a model who had been posed to create the illusion of self-mutilation. Disproving the notion that Schwarzkogler had died as the result of an aesthetic carried too far, she pointed out that the photographs had been taken by 1966—three years before the artist met his demise, "either by falling, jumping, or attempting to fly from his apartment window in Vienna in a state of extreme agitation and hallucination."

Hughes is rueful but unrepentant. "This is one of these pieces of art-world folklore, and it was in circulation before I got to it," he said the other day, while thirty-seven of Schwarzkogler's photographic "documents," including several of the mutilation pictures, were being unpacked for the show. "The idea of anybody unmanning himself in this way is so horrendous and weird that I think it developed a kind of credibility. Who on earth would want to make *that* up? . . . I just thought, Well, here is this ultra nut taking to the final extreme the gesture of van Gogh with his ear. . . . And I was wrong. . . . I will go down there and sprinkle ashes upon my head while kneeling on a piece of sackcloth and apologize to the offended shade of Rudy Schwarzkogler." Not that such self-abasement would be likely to dispel the Schwarzkogler myth, which continues to provide grist for art-crit humor. (Last April, a critic for the London *Independent* identified Schwarzkogler as the artist who had "performed a Lorena Bobbitt on himself.") "Unfortunately, there's no way to put the toothpaste back into the tube," Hughes said.

## A MATTER OF GRAVITY

THE moderator of the symposium at New York University last week which brought Alan Sokal face to face with Andrew Ross for the first time said that the evening was really about something very simple; namely, whether "there are any intellectual standards in this corner of the left." It seemed like a fair question. Sokal, after all, is the N.Y.U. physicist who earlier this year wrote a devastating parody of academic-speak (which claimed, among other things, that "physical 'reality' . . . is at bottom a social and linguistic construct") and submitted it straight-facedly to the leftist journal *Social Text*. And Ross, the N.Y.U. cultural-studies theorist who co-edits *Social Text*, was one of those who unwittingly printed it, thereby exposing himself to a great deal of ridicule and raising the



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ROYAL CARIBBEAN

rather disquieting possibility that in some corners of the left things like, say, gravity and other constituents of physical reality are actually considered no more than social and linguistic constructs. Oh, dear.

Sokal is a boyish, bespectacled man, with a physicist's haircut and a mischievous look in his eye. Ross is a brooding Scotsman, with matinée-idol features and a certain dark charm. The two men considered the weighty issue of intellectual standards from behind a conference table in a large, crowded lecture hall, looking directly at each other only once, when Sokal offered Ross a glass of water and Ross, understandably suspicious of his colleague's offerings, declined. It was Sokal's point that some people on the left had let their allegiance to postmodernism muddle their thinking. He gave as an example an archeologist who asserted that there was no incompatibility between the position of scientists who had evidence that Native Americans came to North America across the Bering Strait more than ten thousand years ago and the position of Indians who believed that their ancestors arose, fully formed, from a subterranean spirit world. Sokal said that the positions *were* incompatible, and asked which one was true. His question seemed entirely reasonable, at least until the postmodernists in the audience began to pick it apart.

"On whose authority should we be forced to answer your question?" someone at the back asked Sokal.

At this, Sokal appeared a bit puzzled, and so Stanley Aronowitz, the City University sociology professor who cofounded *Social Text*, stepped in. "It's a metatheoretical question," he said. "He's asking whether the framing itself is subject to interrogation."

"I don't understand," Sokal responded, a little exasperated. "These are two theories that are mutually contradictory."

"Oh, no," someone else chimed in. "The question is, Should the question be answered?"

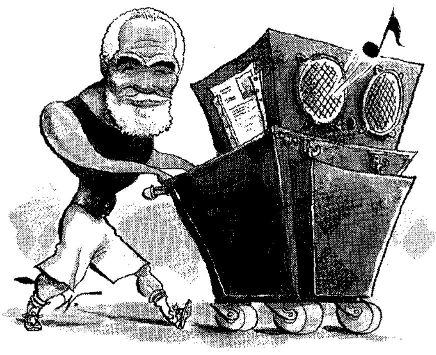
Sokal was on unfamiliar ground now, and things were getting worse, because just then Andrew Ross leaned across the table, breaking his brooding silence.

"Why would you choose a question that would put on trial Native Americans?" he said, seizing the upper hand. "Why, then, in a polarizing way, are we asked to decide this question?"

Sokal was interested in an answer to the question. But it was dawning on him that the audience was chiefly interested in questioning the question, and in the questions raised by the questioning—not just about Indians but surely about gravity as well—and if you looked very closely you could see that the little look of mischief in his eye had vanished.

## PUSHCART PRESSINGS

So George Jackson, seventeen, comes north from Florida in 1941, washes dishes in Atlantic City for a year, wakes in the middle of one night thinking, I'm going to New York. Hasn't ever been, doesn't know anyone there, but he's impetuous and not afraid of anything—it's his home training, the way he was brought up—so he throws off the covers, dresses, and goes down to the bus station. On the bus, he starts a conversation with a guy from Harlem, and the guy invites him home, puts him up on his couch, and the next day Jackson takes a room in an apartment house across the street for four dollars a week. Three days later, he's down to sixty-five cents, no job, but he's never had problems like some people, they worry, Jackson doesn't know what it's like to worry. For a nickel, he takes the subway to Fiftieth Street, for fifty-five cents goes to a Clark Gable–Lana Turner picture, has a nickel left for the subway back to his room. Had no breakfast, had no lunch. Landlady offers him dinner, but his home training tells him to say no (courtesy). She insists. He eats dinner, takes the dishes to the kitchen, and meets her son, who sets him up next day with a job, delivery boy for a laundry on Amsterdam Avenue.



*George Jackson*

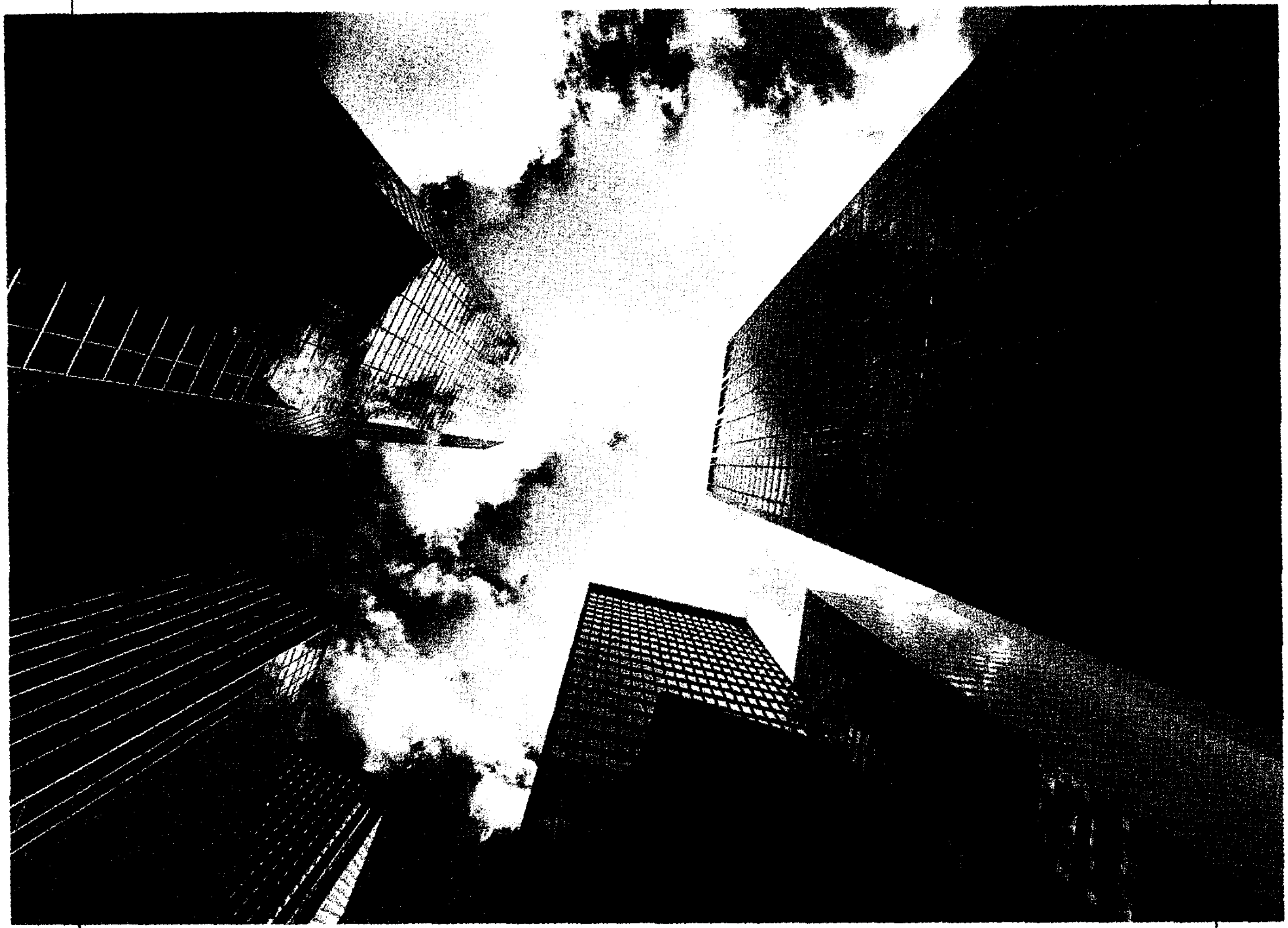
Fifty-five years later, retired from a career that included table busing, dishwashing, being a chef, and owning a bar—"I had a family to raise, so I took any job I could get," Jackson says—he becomes George Jackson, seventy-two, proprietor of Manhattan's only portable night club, featuring, exclusively, the vocal stylings of George Jackson. Jackson's night club consists of a cart he pushes laboriously up and down Broadway. The cart is about the size of a grocery-store delivery cart and is painted black. Jackson built it in his living room. "It took me two weeks," he says, "because I wasn't a carpenter." In the well of the cart is a CD-player that broadcasts selections from "That Old Feeling," Jackson's CD, which he sells for fifteen dollars (a tape is ten) and on which he performs such songs as "My Funny Valentine" and "Begin the Beguine"—music from a bygone era, as he calls it. Jackson, who is tall and wiry, pushes the cart each sunny day from Ninety-sixth Street down Broadway, beginning at noon. He wears a weight lifter's belt and a black T-shirt that says, in green letters, "The Person You Hear Singing Is Me." When Jackson arrives at Columbus Circle, he decides whether to go east or south. Sometimes he goes as far south as the Village. He usually gets home around midnight. "I figure that the only way I'm going to get my music out there is to cover as much of Manhattan as possible," he says.

The idea of the cart came to Jackson while he was making the record and wasn't sure how he would sell it. "I didn't think of putting it in the record stores, because at my age I didn't imagine people would buy it," he says. "I'm the advertising and the advertising budget all in one." In the well of the cart Jackson also has his inventory, bottles of water, batteries for the CD-player—he uses marine batteries, which he charges at night—and extra wheels. Once he spent the night with his cart on Seventh Avenue in the Forties when he broke a wheel in a pothole and couldn't get anyone to come help him until noon the next day.

Under the most fortunate circumstances, Jackson might sell a tape or a CD every twenty minutes. Even so, he occasionally has reservations about his marketing plan. "Sometimes I say to myself, 'George Jackson, you're crazy. You should be slowing down,' " he says. "This is something I always wanted to do, though—not pushing a cart but getting my music out there." ♦

*"Concession Stand," Hendrik Hertzberg; "Schwarzkogler's Ear," Murray White; "A Matter of Gravity," Malcolm Gladwell; "Pushcart Pressings," Alec Wilkinson.*

# When did you stop looking up?



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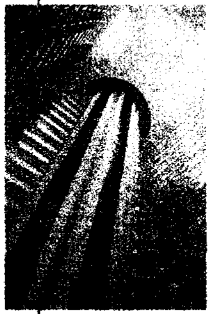

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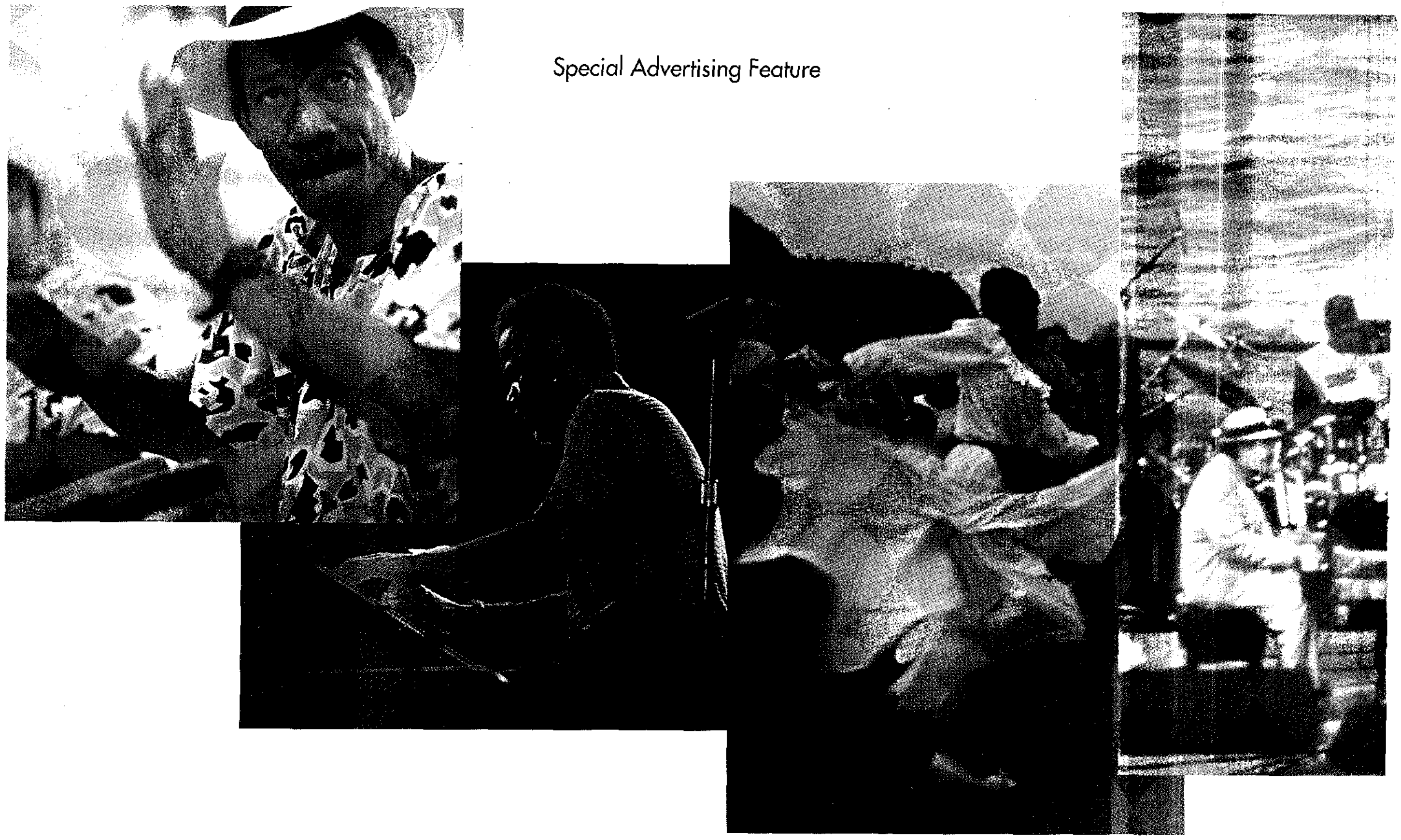


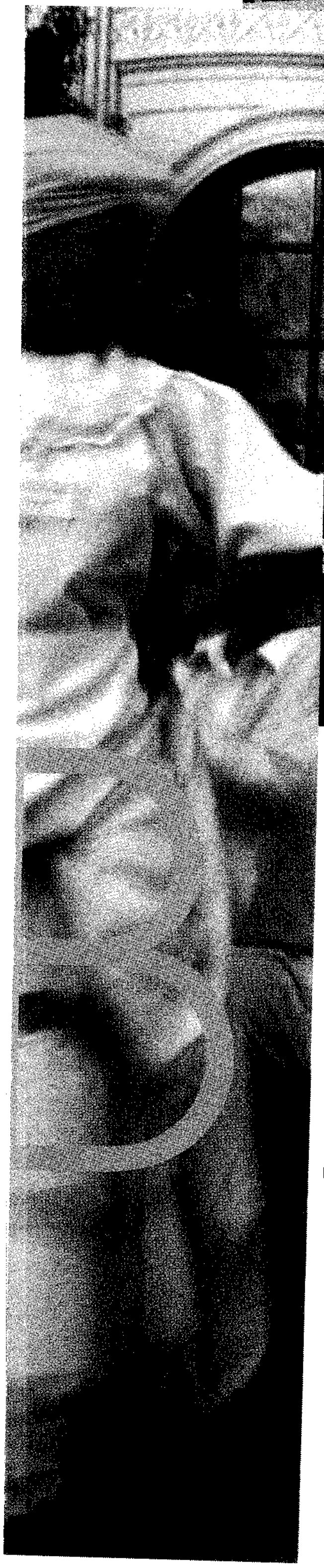
# Rhythms of the CARIB

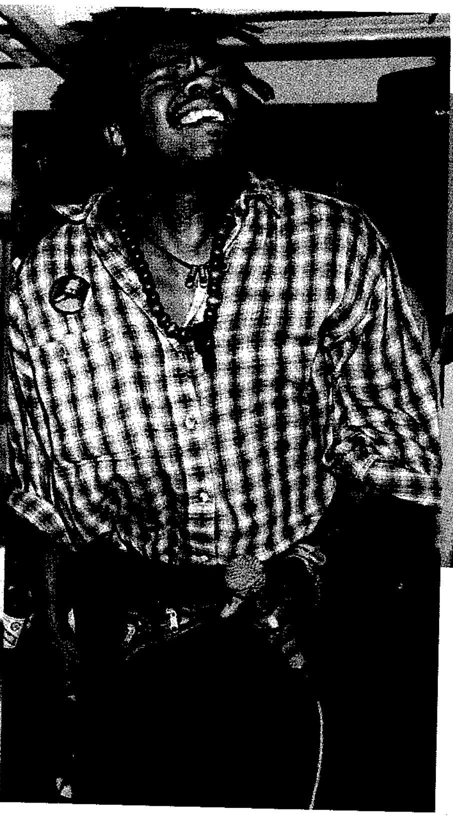
In the evening when the sun goes down, the heartbeat of the Caribbean people is magically heard in the sensuous and savory mix of Latino, Creole, Afro, Indian, and American rhythms. Folks go "limin'" to a "chat" or a "jump-up." Calypso singers, steelband players, and reggae groups are ubiquitous—warmups to the region's smorgasbord of carnivals, music festivals, and pulsating happenings of night *and* day.

The popularity of Caribbean music has grown worldwide. It peppers the airwaves and you can see live performances at clubs or concert halls no matter where you live. But it's not the same as hearing it at the source itself. Whether blaring from the speakers of an open car or a steamy, packed disco, it's music that will reverberate in your ears long after you leave the Caribbean.

## Beyond Marley

Over a couple of Red Stripe beers at a bar in Port Antonio, Jamaican rasta named Sidney bragged that he was a friend of the late Robert Nesta Marley, the King of Reggae Music. Sidney, who claimed to have played drums for the Wailers on the famed "Exodus"





*(left to right)* Folkloric fest in Puerto Rico, photo credit: Bob Krist; Joe Sample at the St. Croix Jazz Festival, credit: David Cover; Ponce dancer, photo courtesy of Puerto Rico Tourism Company; Dr. John visits the St. Lucia Jazz fest; detail of dancing Ponce woman, credit: Joe Colon for the Puerto Rico Tourism Company; Jamaican artist Luciano, credit: Donald Christie; Freddie McGregor at Reggae Sunsplash in Montego Bay, credit: Bill Smith.

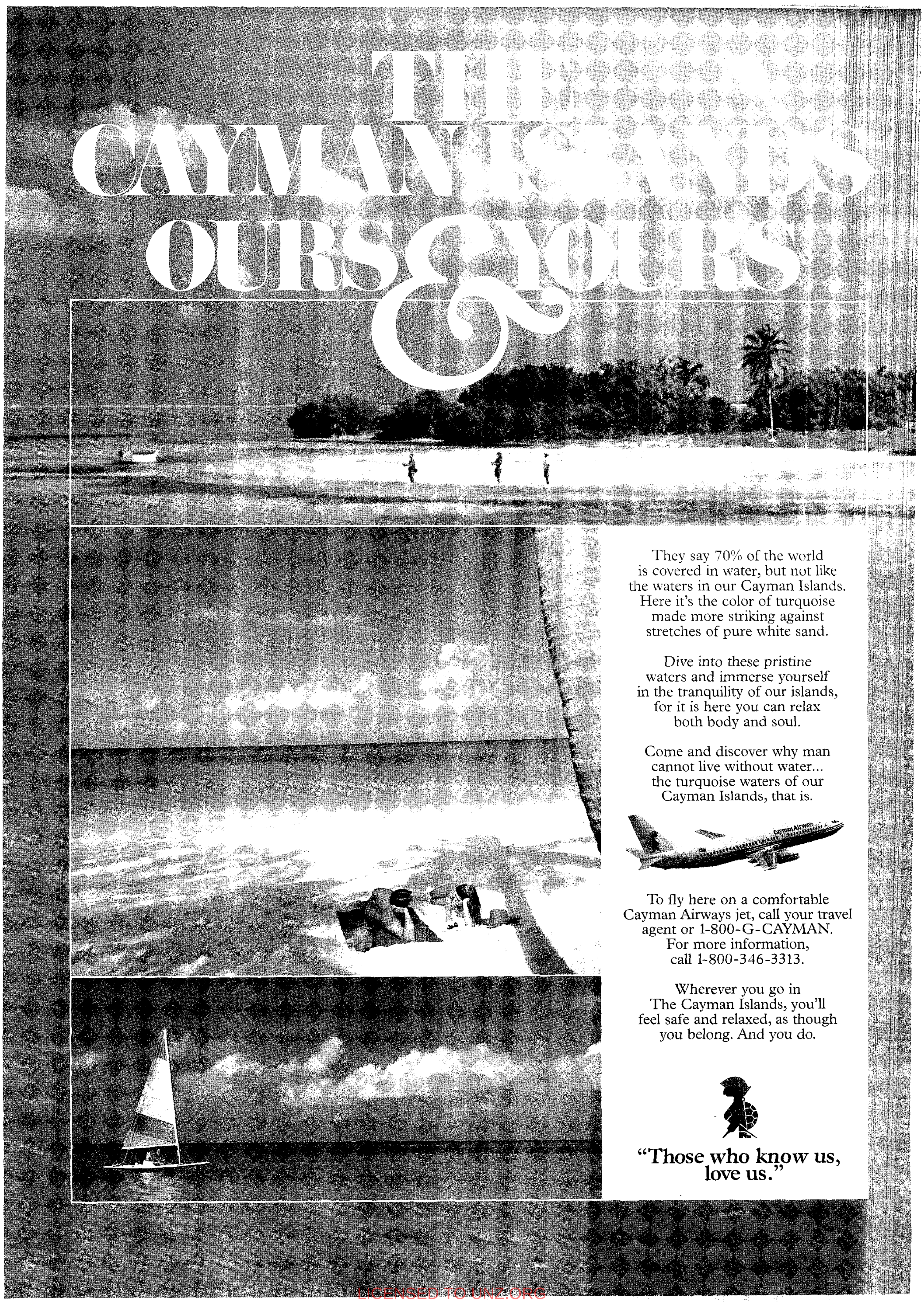
# EAN

album, is not unlike other Jamaicans; everyone seems to have a personal connection to Marley, whether real or imagined.

Sixteen years after his death, Marley's musical legacy continues to evolve. By the late '80s, his righteous, social-protest anthems were replaced by the bodacious, violent, and sexually explicit sounds of dancehall—a melding of reggae and rap. Provocative dancehall rap hits from Shabba Ranks, Ninja Man, and Little Lenny were topping the charts, while reggae artists—Dennis Brown, Gregory Isaacs, Freddie McGregor, and Beres Hammond, with their smooth, soulful ballads—continued to carry the Marley torch. Today, dancehall performers who have grown weary of the braggadocio have returned to their roots, with artists like Luciano, Beenie Man, Chakademus & Pliers, and Marley's son Ziggy, singing about peace, love, and respect once again.

Whether visiting Nine Miles, Marley's birthplace, or stopping at a roadside stand for a bite of steamed fish, the recorded vibes of reggae will attend you. Live, however, the most famous reggae event is Reggae Sunsplash, with Reggae Sumfest a close runner-up *(see calendar)*. At Sunsplash this past August performers Third World were featured; at Sumfest, Luciano and Beenie Man. Visit one of the most popular and picturesque of Jamaica's nightclubs, Kaiser's, located on the cliffs of Negril, on the island's west coast.

Jazz festivals are also cropping up all over the Caribbean. Jamaica hosts it's own fest, and the island is spawning musicians that play a fusion of reggae and jazz. Guitarist Ernest Ranglin, who developed the ska-shuffle rhythm that launched Jamaican popular music, released his "Below The Baseline" album this year on the Island Jamaica Jazz label.



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# New Sparks Feed Salsa Fires

On a hot Sunday in Manhattan this past June, Tito Puente, the most famous figure in Latin music, was sitting on a milk crate and wiping sweat from his brow. Puente, resting after performing in the Puerto Rican Day Parade, was surrounded by a cluster of older women, who were offering him their grandchildren to hug. A float came down the street followed by a large crowd of screaming teenage girls; the object of their adulation was handsome young salsa star Jerry Rivera. Was this scene an indication that the old guard in Latin music was fading, while new, up-and-coming stars were taking the lead? Not so! Performers like Cuban-born salsa star, Celia Cruz, in her seventies, displays more energy on stage than singers less than half her age. Cuban-born bassist, Israel Lopez (better known as "Cachao"), nearly eighty, was this year's featured performer at the Heineken JazzFest in San Juan.

Not only is the old guard still going strong, but they are now collaborating with the younger stars of salsa. Tito Puente recently released a CD with rising Puerto Rican diva, India, while Cachao's newest, "Master Sessions" CDs were co-produced by Emilio Estefan Jr. (husband of Gloria Estefan) and actor Andy Garcia.

In Puerto Rico, a festival—any festival—is a good excuse to revel in live salsa. There are so many patron saints' festivals throughout the year that it would be difficult to visit the island when one didn't occur. The biggest festival is Carnaval, which takes place in February. In Ponce, on Puerto Rico's southern coast, the festivities, including non-stop salsa, are extravagant. Pick up a copy of *¿Que Pasa?* for current listings of what's doing and where, and you can catch a live salsa band at one of San Juan's many nightclubs or hotels. Sponsored by the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, The *Le Lo Lai* program offers VIP cards ($10) that entitle visitors to discounts for shows, revues, and sites of interest throughout the island. Cards are also available at the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, various hotels, the airports, and travel agencies.

# Working Up a Merengue Sweat

You have just gotten off the plane in the Dominican Republic and you hear it. The accordion is playing at a frenetic pace, accompanied by a saxophone, drums, and an unfamiliar instrument making a scraping sound. The vocals, in Spanish, compete with the instrumental renditions in intensity. Your hips react involuntarily to the music; you can't control them when you try. You thought you were headed for a relaxing, restful vacation. Instead, you have been infected with the merengue bug.

Merengue, like baseball, is an all-consuming passion in the Dominican Republic. In Santo Domingo, an entire week in July is devoted to a festival in its honor. The brightest merengue stars of the moment are the Grammy Award-winning Juan Luís Guerra, the silk-voiced Sergio Vargas, the sexy Las Chicas del Can (an all-female band), and the incomparable Wilfrido Vargas, who blends African and Haitian

**Merengue, like baseball, is an all-consuming passion.**

rhythms into his own brand of merengue. Santo Domingo's Avenida George Washington—also known as the Malecon—turns into a merengue street party on Saturday nights. You can stand on the sidelines and watch the Dominicans make the merengue look easy or you can join in and give it your best shot.

credit: Philippe Giraud

Street revelers strut their stuff at Guadeloupe's colorful Carnaval de Pointe-à-Pitre.

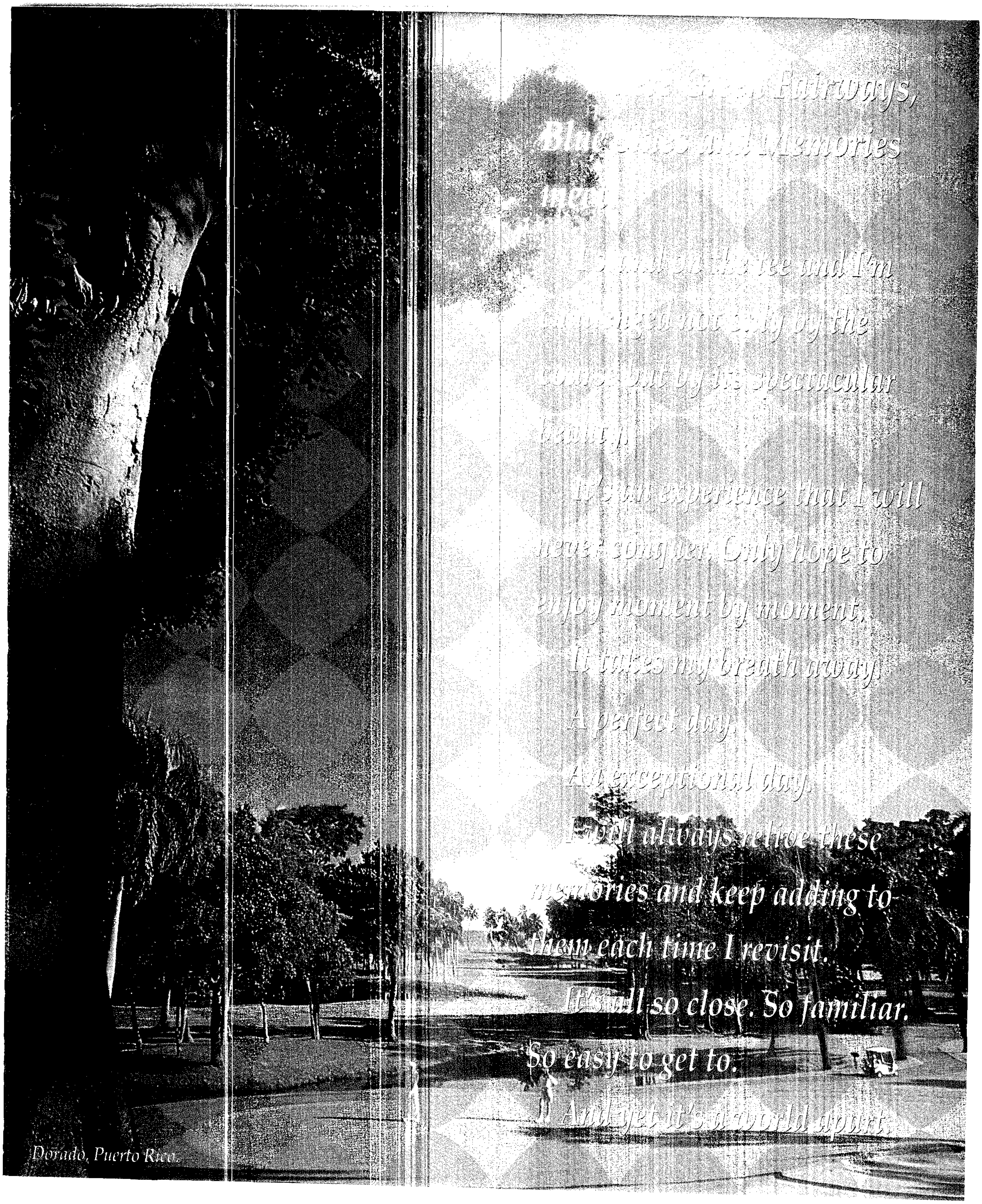
# Carnival Countdown

In Trinidad and Tobago, Carnival begins 364 days before the actual event. The costumes are designed. The pan groups rehearse. The soca and calypsonians write their songs. Dancing and costumes are an important part of Carnival, which precedes the season of Lent, but it's the music that drives everything else. Different cultures and ethnic groups live together in Trinidad and Tobago, and the music is as varied as the people. Noted for calypso and *pan* (steel drum), Trinidad and Tobago also feature *soca* (soul calypso), *chutney* (East Indian calypso), *parang* (Spanish folk songs), and *pan-jazz* (jazz with a heavy nod to the steel drum).

The greatest honor bestowed on a Trinidadian is to wear the crown of Carnival Monarch, whether it be for calypso, soca, pan, or as Road March winner—an honor bestowed on the creator of the tune chosen by a panel of judges. The calypso and soca competitions are fierce, but it's the steel band contests that really get heated during Carnival. Pan music is an island passion and preoccupation, and the steel drum is now the national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago. Steel bands—sporting lively names such as Skiffle Bunch, Phase II Pan Groove, Despéradoes, and Tropical Angel Harps—can contain more than 100 drummers who play as many as 300 drums.

If your visit to Trinidad doesn't coincide with Carnival season, there are still plenty of opportunities to see and hear live calypso, soca, and pan. The best is at a fête, which can take place on the beach, in a park, or on the street. Admission to a fête (usually just a few dollars) will set you up with music and dancing all night long. If you keep your eyes and ears open, and ask at your hotel, the chances are good that you'll stumble upon one during your visit.

**Bajans like their pepper sauce extra hot and their music equally spicy.**



*Green Fairways, Blue Skies and Memories meet.*

*I stand on the tee and I'm challenged not only by the course but by its spectacular beauty.*

*It's an experience that I will never conquer. Only hope to enjoy moment by moment.*

*It takes my breath away.*

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*An exceptional day.*

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# Soca 'n' Pepper

Barbados is considered to be the most "British" island in the Caribbean, meaning that manners are impeccable, and the people tend to be reserved. But then there's Crop Over. This annual summer festival celebrates the end of the sugar crop harvest, where the revelry equals that of Trinidad's Carnival. In reality, Bajans are anything but reserved—they like their pepper sauce extra hot and their music equally spicy. And the fast and furious soca sounds from performers like Gabby, Grymner, Krosfyah, and John King are guaranteed to keep you in the groove.

The Ship Inn, in St. Lawrence Gap (on the island's southern coast) is a top spot to hear live Bajan bands while visiting Barbados. Spice & Co., the group who brought the Caribbean the classic, "De Congaline," appears every Saturday night at Bridgetown's Harbour Lights. Their tune is so popular that Barbados now has De Congaline Carnival, which features the world's longest conga line. Locally on the airwaves, YESS 104.1 FM, 900 AM, and 790 AM mix calypso and soca in their varied formats. Barbados also plays host to its own jazz fest scheduled every January that recently attracted Ray Charles, Najee, and Dianne Reeves, and will feature Al Jarreau, Grover Washington Jr., and Patti LaBelle, among others, in 1997.

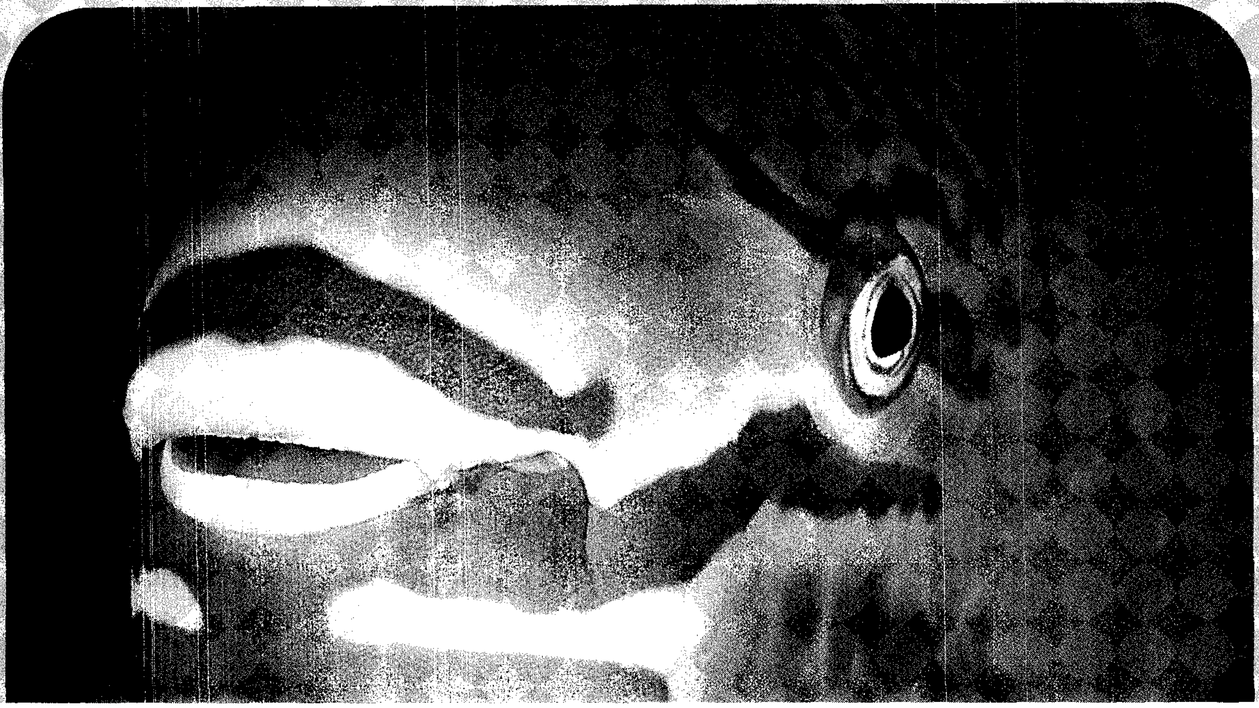
Tour Grenada in one of its public minivans—often filled with boisterous school children and farmers carrying sacks of nutmeg—and be treated to an impressive sound system, which blares out dancehall, reggae, gospel, soca, or whatever else the driver prefers. You might hear a marathon broadcast of the music of Mighty Sparrow with great tunes such as "Jean and Dinah" and the irresistible "Congo Man." But if you miss the world's greatest calypsonian, you can see him live at Grenada's Sugar Mill club. Although Sparrow (whose real name is Slinger Francisco) claims Trinidad as his home, he was born in Grenada; and to Grenadians, a man's birthplace is definitely the basis for his genius.

**Grenadian musician Ajamu, like Elvis, even has a postage stamp in his honor.**

Grenadians take great pride in their local heroes, and calypsonians enjoy that status. Grenadian musician, Ajamu, like Elvis Presley, even had a postage stamp created in his honor. But national pride is not just confined to Grenada; you can find it all over the Caribbean. On Montserrat, the national hero is Arrow (Alphonsus Cassell), creator of the soca anthem "Hot, Hot, Hot" (made popular stateside by Buster Poindexter). Meanwhile in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the local soca groups include Touch, Signal, and Black Sand. Both Touch and Signal perform at Touch's self-named club in the capital of Kingstown. Signal also makes regular appearances at the Aquatic Club.

credit: Barbara Currie Dailey

Costumed Caymans masquerade at the dazzling Batabano Festival.



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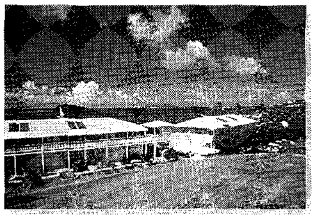

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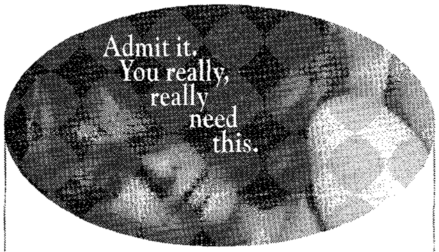

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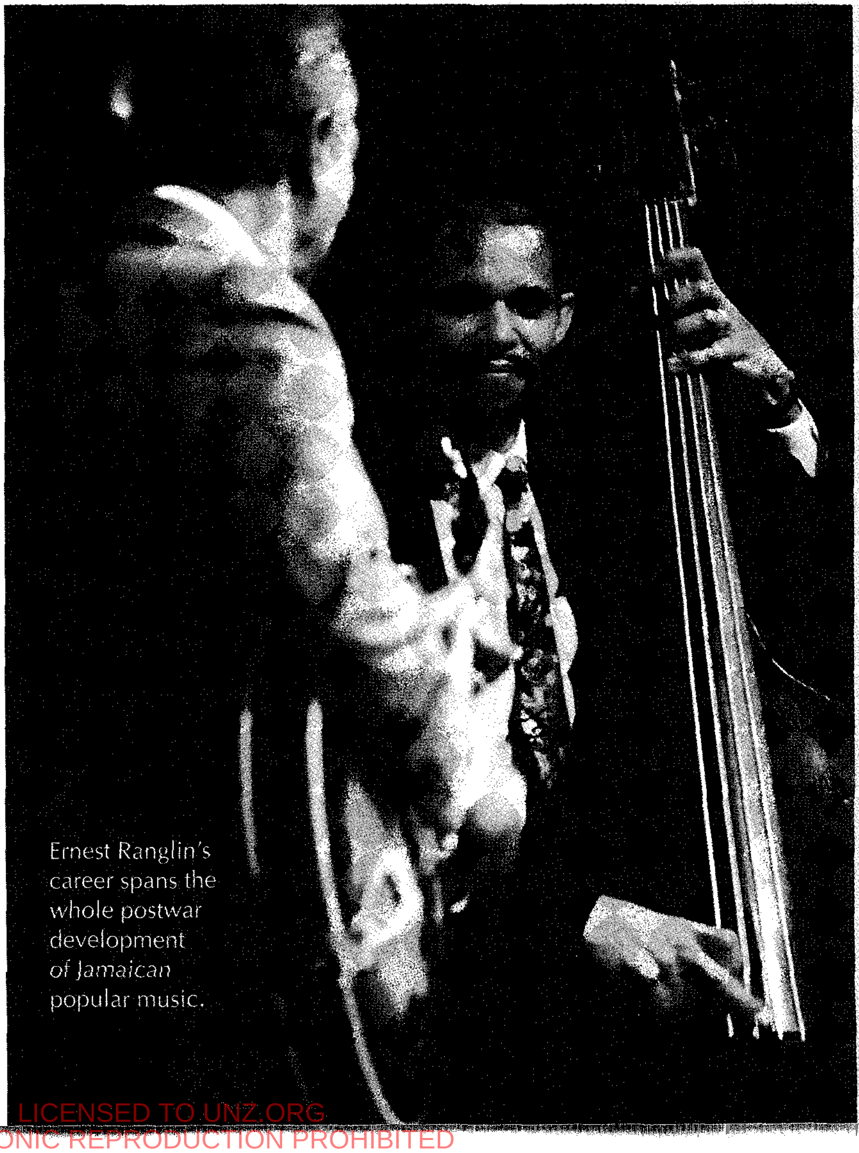
# Jump Up and Fête On

Flowing from their birthplace in Trinidad and Tobago, the sounds of calypso, soca, and pan have spread to all the English-speaking islands of the Caribbean, including the verdant St. Lucia. Here, in the village of Gros Islet, calypso and soca are celebrated every Friday night with a spontaneous "jump up." Similar to the fêtes of Trinidad and Tobago, a jump up is a street party with food, dancing, and music. If you plan to attend one, be prepared to participate because you won't have any choice.

With the blue Caribbean as its backdrop, the St. Lucia Jazz Festival, held in May, might be one of the most picturesque. The Neville Brothers, Dr. John, and Spyro Gyra have recently appeared there. Jody Watley, Kenny G, Chuck Mangione, Cassandra Wilson, and Oleta Adams are scheduled to perform next spring.

The eel-shaped island of Anguilla, and the sister islands of Antigua and Barbuda are most noted for the abundance and beauty of their beaches, while the lush, mountainous island of Dominica is a hiker's paradise. Nights, however, can be spent listening to local calypso and steel bands. Dominica's hot spot is Wykie's La Tropical for *jing-ping*, a type of folk music that features a *quage* (resembling a washboard) and a *boom boom* (percussive instrument). Experience *bouyon* music (a fusion of calypso, jing-ping, and pulsating drums) and local heroes W.C.K. at the Dominica Club and Club Coconut. See local Antiguan bands live at Miller's By The Sea, in St. John's, or Pizza's in Red Cliffe Quay. Look for Antigua's Burning Flames who now enjoy a worldwide audience gleaned from their huge soca hit "Worky, Worky."



Ernest Ranglin's career spans the whole postwar development of Jamaican popular music.

credit: Willie Alleyne Associates/Barbados Tourism Authority

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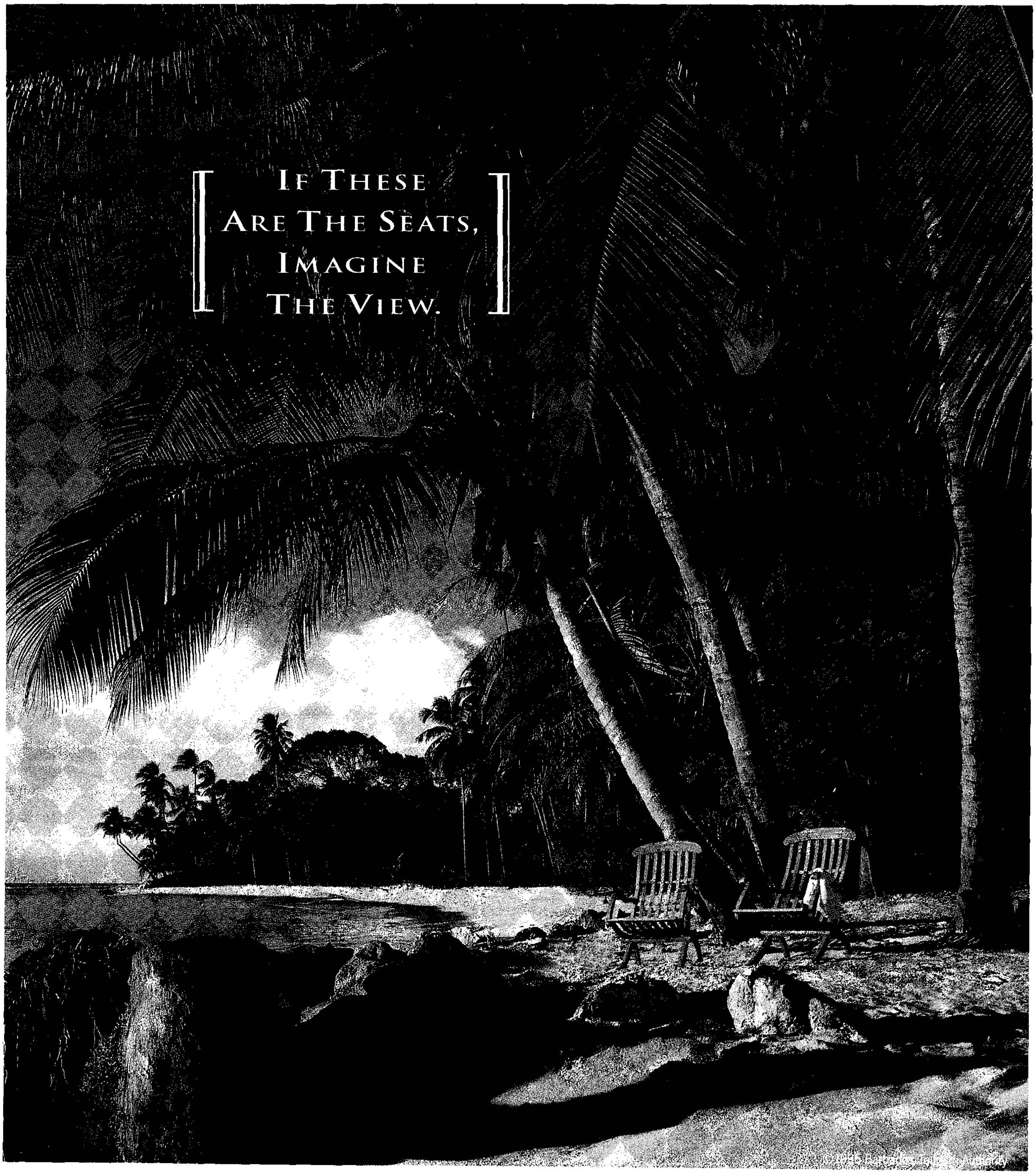
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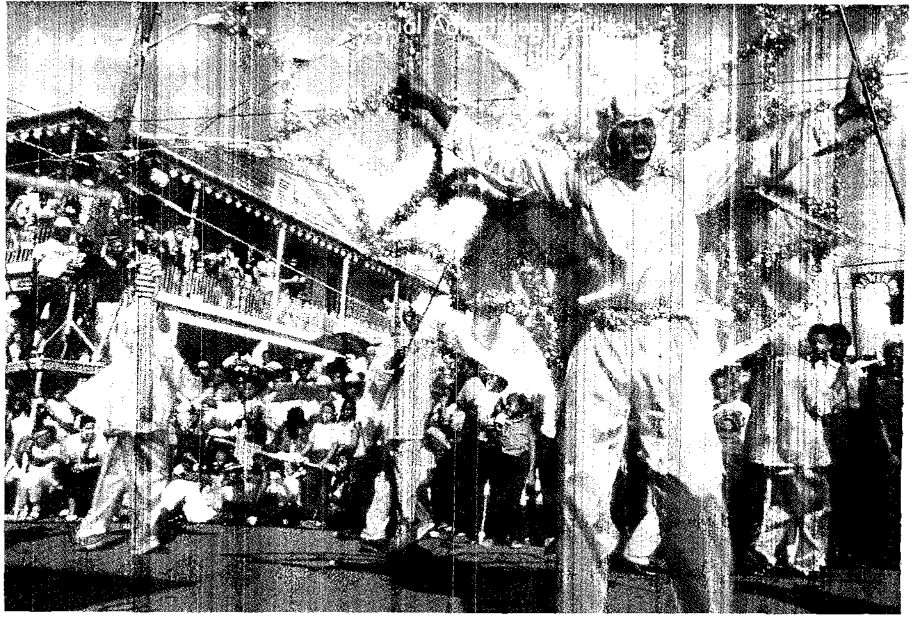


Festivities in the USVI's St. Thomas take flight.

credit: Carol Lee

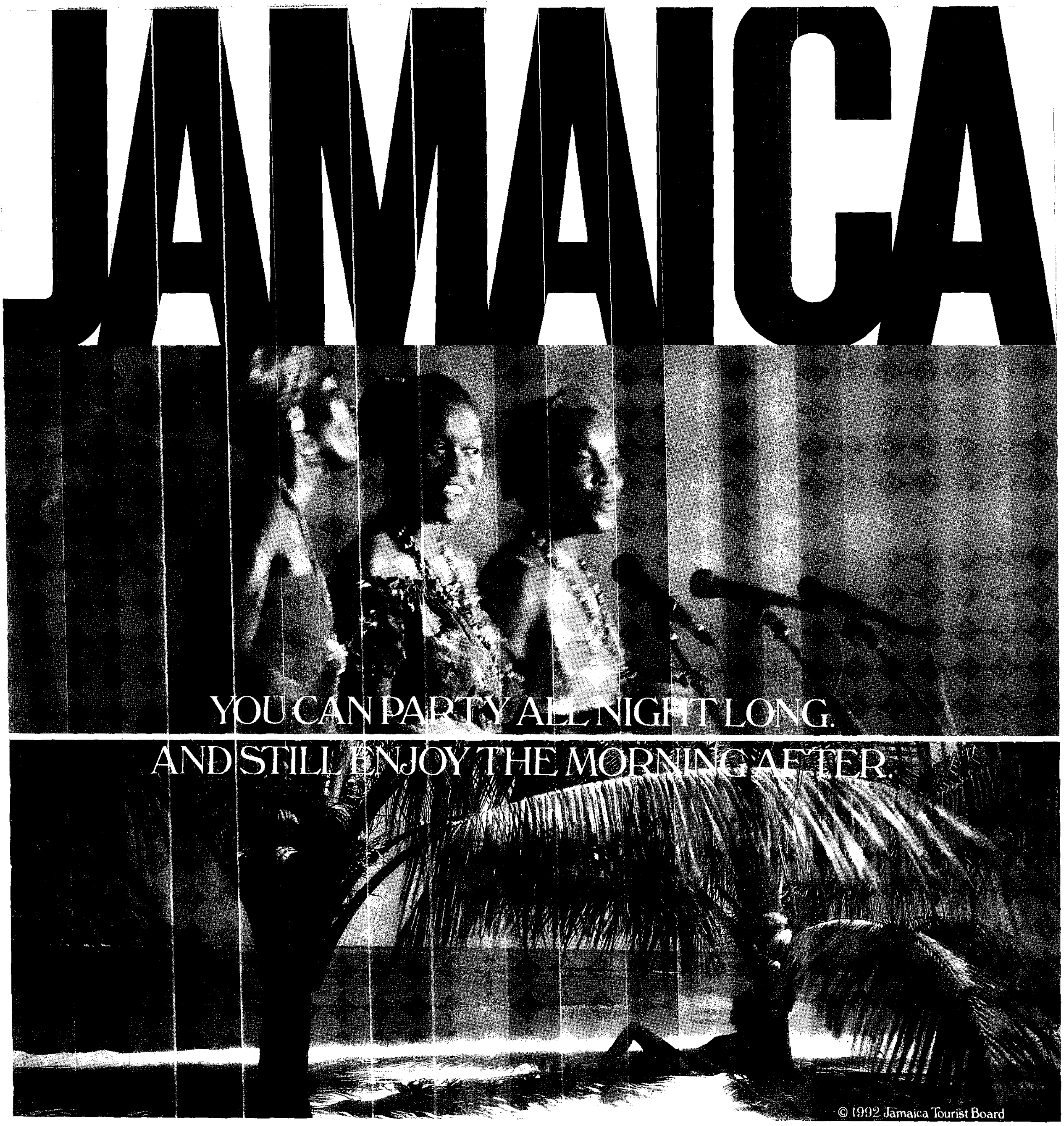
# Zouk, Tumba, and Ra-Ra Rhythms

In the Creole language, the word *zouk* originally meant party. Today it's the name of the music you hear when you visit the islands of the French West Indies. Zouk is a blend of African rhythms, reggae, calypso, and techno pop from the U.S. and Europe. Infectious in a purely positive way, zouk can be heard live on the islands of St. Barts and St. Martin, even though it originated in Guadeloupe and Martinique. Kassav, the best known zouk group, introduced the music to the rest of the world. Other zouk greats include Kali, who incorporates folk rhythms into his music; Malavoi, a band with classical roots; and Dédé Saint Prix, who combines traditional flute playing and drums with an updated dance beat. In Martinique's Fort-de-France, Cocoloco, Papagayo, and La Cave du Roi are where to go to hear it played.

It's been two years since democracy was restored to Creole-speaking Haiti, and the government seems to be stabilizing. That's good news for music fans because the Haitian music scene may be the most vibrant in the Caribbean. Even during the political turbulence, Haitian music, called *ra-ra*, thrived. Groups like Boukman Eksperyans, Tabou Combo, Boukan Ginen, and Ra-Ra Machine have developed a distinct Haitian sound by incorporating African influences, elements of indigenous voodoo rituals, Latin salsa, Dominican merengue, calypso, and vocals sung in Creole.

> **Bahamian bands gather and play on goatskin drums, cowbells, bugles, horns, whistles, and conch shells.**

Another musical form blended from Latin and African influences is *tumba*, which is native to the Dutch islands of Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao. Tumba is played at carnivals, and in Curaçao it is celebrated with a four-day Tumba Festival. Thousands fill the Curaçao Festival Center to determine who will be Tumba King. The winner is elevated to hero status until the next year's king is crowned. At the Bon Bini Festival each Tuesday night in the courtyard of the Fort Zoutman Museum, you can sample Aruban foods, crafts, folkloric dancing, and music. Or partake in the dazzling nightlife options at Aruba's many casinos and clubs.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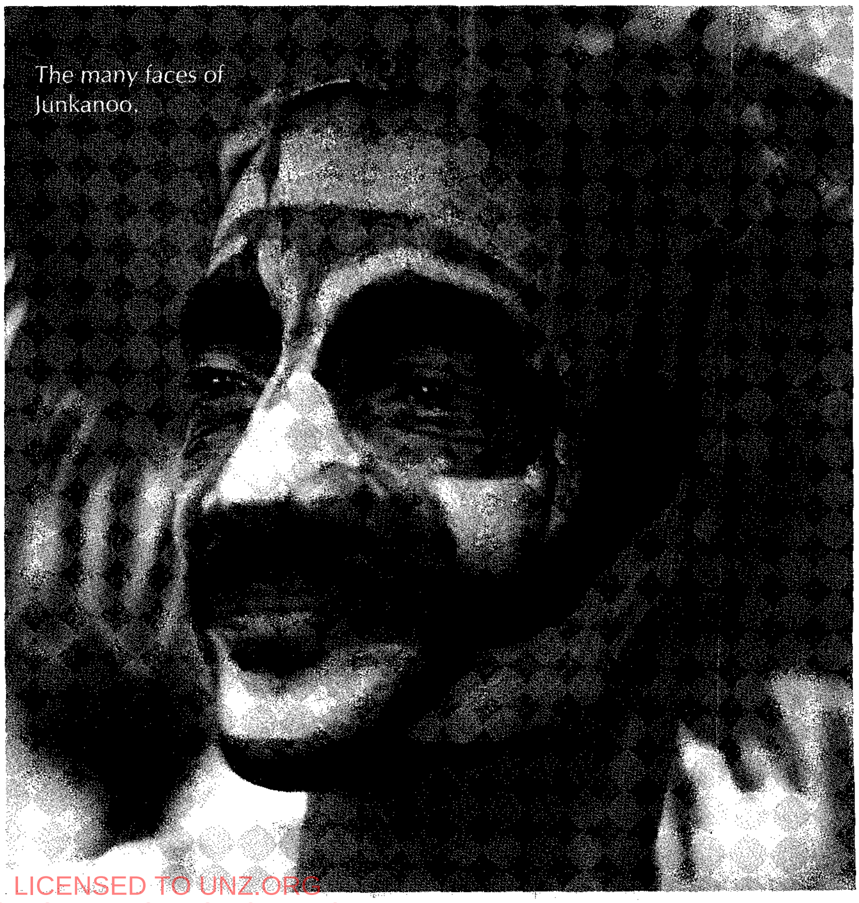
# Fungi, Scratch, and String Exotica

The islands of St. Kitts and Nevis are known for their plantation great houses, now impeccably restored. The Honey Bees, a local group of Nevisian musicians, recently played at the wedding of a Dutch couple that was held at a former plantation built in 1740. The music issuing from the great-house courtyard seemed as strange and ancient as the plantation itself. What makes "string" bands like the Honey Bees so unusual is their locally made instruments, including a four-stringed guitar called a *quako* and a horn made from a tree trunk known as a *baho.*

On the British Virgin Islands, bands playing the same type of music and using similarly constructed instruments are called *fungi.* The names of the *fungi* bands—Lashing Dogs, Romeo and the Injectors, Gun and the Shots—are as colorful as their music. Related celebrations occur each year at the Fungi Band Fiesta in December, a Fungi Fest on Boxing Day (December 26), and during August Festival Days. All year round, Fungi bands can be heard in local bars and clubs such as Sebastian's, in the old fishing village of Apple Bay, and Mrs. Scatliffe's in Carrot Bay (both on Tortola), as well as at Foxy's on Jost Van Dyke.

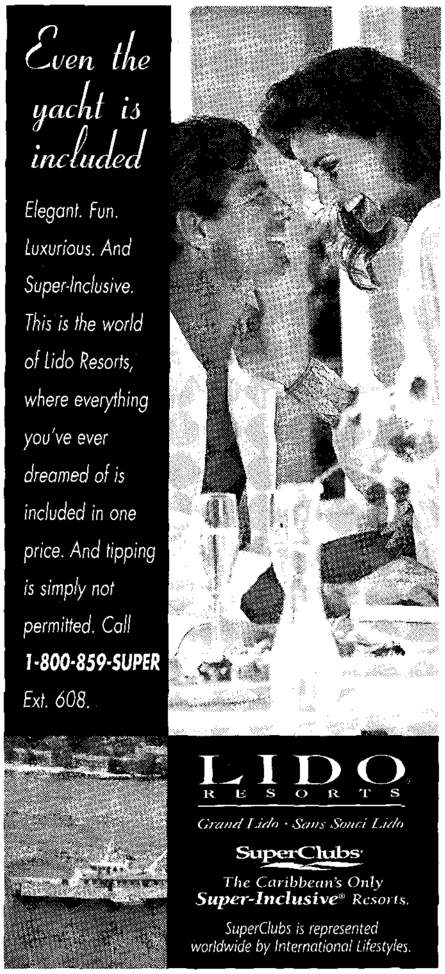
The United States Virgin Islands' spin on fungi bands is called *quelbe* or scratch bands. Hear Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights, Blinky and the Roadmasters, or Bully and the Karfooners at the Mt. Pellier Hut Domino Club in St. Croix. The "hut" features dominoes and is located on the fringe of St. Croix's rainforest. Other attractions at the club include a spiced herb and rum specialty drink called "Mamma Wanna," and four beer-swilling pigs named Tony, Toni, J.J., and Miss Piggy (who indulge in a purely non-alchoholic variety of "ale"). Hondo's on the famed King Street in St. Croix is the hot night spot there. *St. Croix This Week* will keep you tuned in to this island's sights and sounds as they develop.

St. Thomas, not surprisingly, garners the lion's share of nightlife when compared to its sister islands St. Croix and St. John. Try Barnacle Bill's, the Paradise Club at Bolongo's Limetree Beach Resort, and the Greenhouse for live local bands. While in St. John, visit Fred's and The Bad Art Bar.



The many faces of Junkanoo.

credit: Maro Garanges



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# Bahama Party

Throughout the 700 Islands Of The Bahamas, businesses shut down on December 26 (Boxing Day) and New Year's Day, and Bahamians take to the streets in elaborate costumes to celebrate the festival of Junkanoo. The festival's roots can be traced to Africa, and since the 1920s, Junkanoo has become a Bahamian institution. Like Carnival elsewhere, Junkanoo features food, dancing, costumes, and, of course, music. But the music of Junkanoo is unique. Bands gather and play on goatskin drums, cowbells, bugles, horns, whistles, and conch shells—creating a contagious beat that keeps the revelers dancing 'til dawn.

If you miss Junkanoo, many of the top hotels keep the fest's spirit alive by staging miniversions of it weekly. There is a strong Junkanoo influence in the music of Bahamian bands, where the local instruments merge with the electronic instruments of today. The best known band is the Bahamen, whose remake of "Funky Nassau" was a recent hit. You can catch the Bahamen, and other groups like Piccolo Pete and the Buccaneers or Dry Bread, at Goldie's on Arawak Cay and the Culture Club, both in Nassau.

Farther south, The Cayman Islands are visited by neighboring Jamaican music talents like Byron Lee and the Dragonaires. Music is also featured at the many cultural celebrations that take place during the year, including Pirate's Week and CayFest. Rumheads in the Islander Complex, a relatively new club popular with the younger crowd, has hit the hot-spot list and features a mix of live and recorded music. The Lions Club in Red Bay is a venue for top name American and Caribbean performers. Catch local roots reggae artists Tabia at various venues around Grand Cayman. Distributed free throughout the island, *What's Hot* is a magazine guide to current entertainment options, or the Friday issue of the *Caymanian Compass* will provide some direction to the local happenings. Tune in to Radio Caymen on 105.3 FM and 89.9 FM, and Z99 FM featuring Caribbean music throughout the broadcast day.

credit: Jack Deutsch

Kassav group in a zouk groove.

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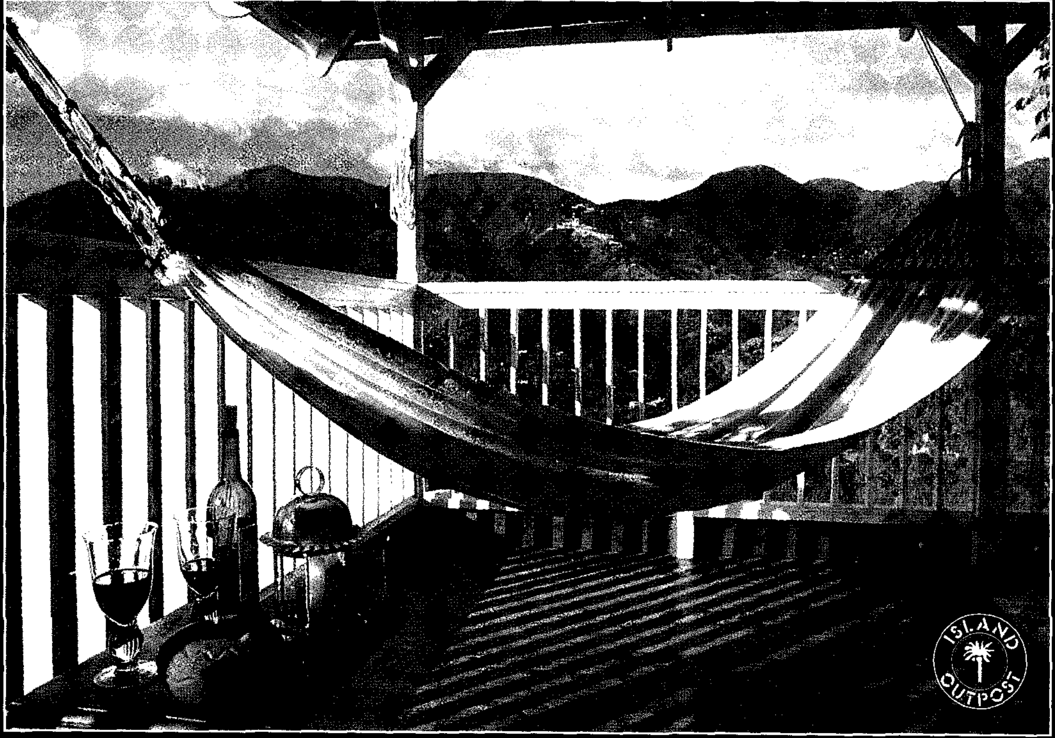

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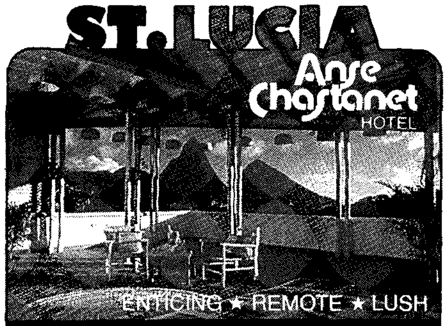

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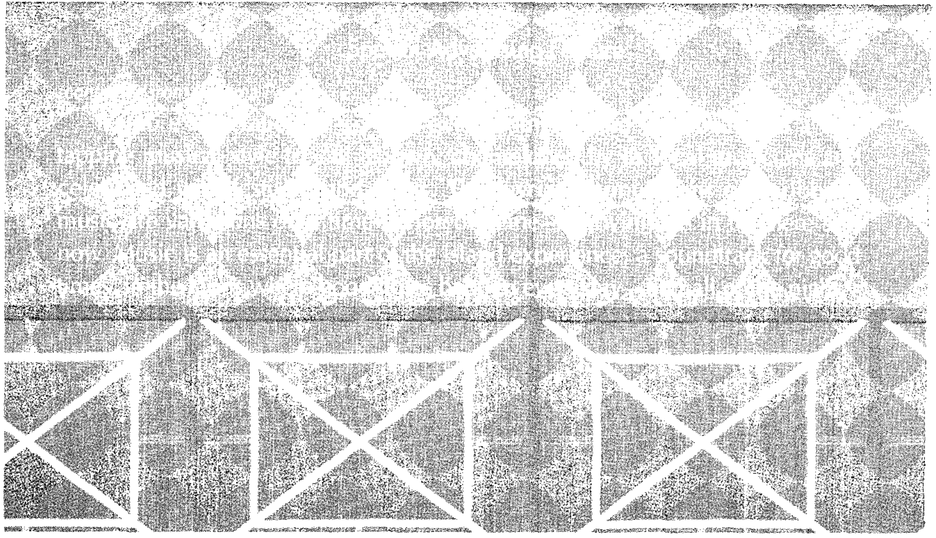
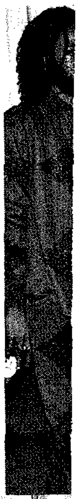


# Tabia Wins “Rhythms of th
# Talent Search



credit: Anne Hall

Tabia, a roots reggae group from The Cayman Islands, was selected this past spring as the winner of the first annual "Rhythms of the Caribbean"—a musical talent search sponsored by *The New Yorker*, Island Jamaica, and The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO).

"Rhythms of the Caribbean" was created to discover new, unsigned musical talent—showcasing the indigenous sounds of the Caribbean for an international audience. In its inaugural year, twenty-five of the more than thirty CTO member nations participated in the talent search, inviting judges from the recording label, Island Jamaica, to local and regional festivals or concerts featuring local talent or to hear tapes of their local music and artists. Judges were flown to participating nations and islands courtesy of BWIA International Airways.

Tabia (a Swahili word, fittingly, meaning talent) is known for its infectious rhythms, spirited performances, and rich vocal stylings. Founding members include drummer Stephen McDermott, vocalist Hubert Campbell, and his brothers Lloyd and Barry on keyboards. The group has twelve years experience to its credit and has toured with Third World, Ziggy Marley, Steele Pulse, and Jimmy Cliff. As winner of the "Rhythms of the Caribbean" contest, the group has cut a demo CD with the Island Jamaica label featuring its winning song "Exile."

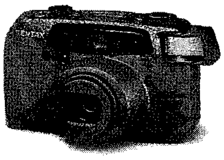
The contest's Second Prize winner, Dominica's W.C.K. (Windward Caribbean Kulture), was formed eight years ago to create a fusion of calypso, jing-ping, and pulsating drums now popularly known as *bouyon* music. Latin soul artists Tunantes from Venezuela came in third place, and a tie for fourth place was given to Roderick Pinder and Kevan McKenzie of The Islands of The Bahamas and King Posse of Haiti. Second, third, and fourth-place winners will receive *sound equipment* awarded by Island Jamaica.

During the twentieth annual Caribbean Tourism Organization conference held this past September, Tabia performed a live concert at Ilaro Court, residence of the Prime Minister of Barbados, together with W.C.K., Tunantes, and Island Jamaica recording artist Spanner Banner. Throughout the course of the talent search, Tabia was flown to all venues courtesy of Cayman Airways. Cardinal Airlines provided transportation for W.C.K..

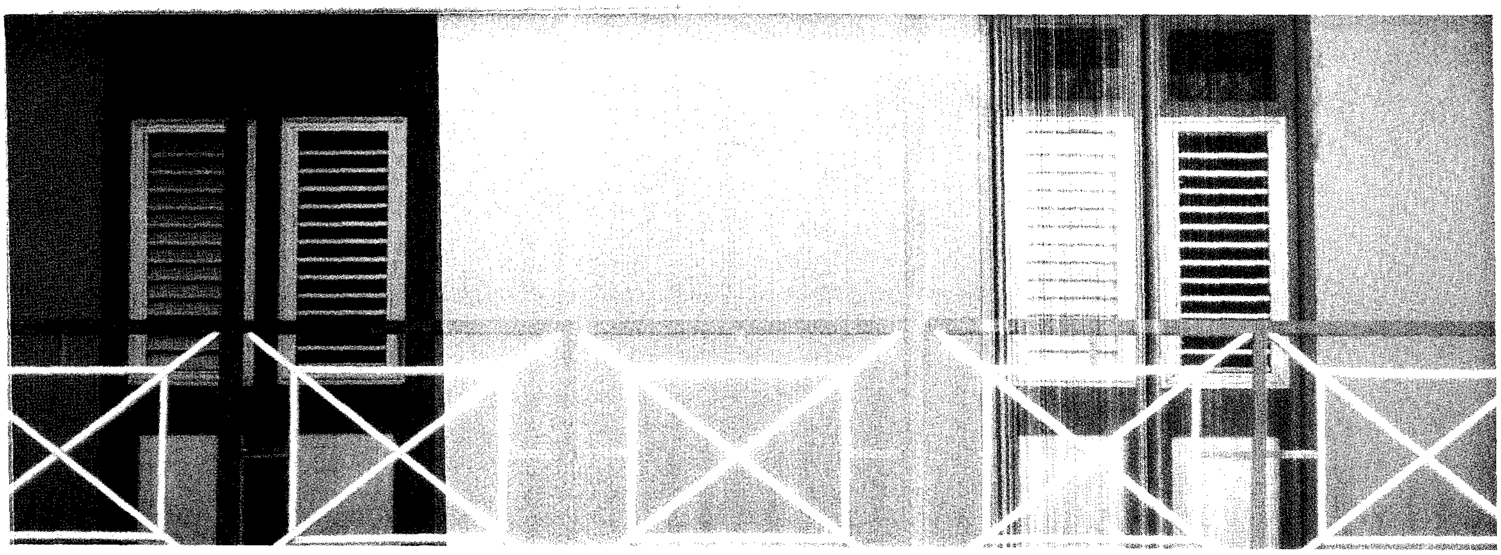
The second annual "Rhythms of the Caribbean" talent search welcomes American Airlines as a sponsor, which will fly Island Jamaica judges to festivals and music competitions held throughout the nations and islands of the Caribbean. The Grand Prize winner will receive a singles record contract with Island Jamaica, and the Second Prize winner will receive a Pentax IQZoom 160 camera with a 38-160mm lens. Island Jamaica will provide CD collections to the second and third place winners.

credit: Willie Alleyne Associates/BTA

Angelic delivery of Island Jamaica group Spanner Banner charms the crowd at the recent CTO event in Barbados.



Second prize winner of next year's talent search to receive Pentax IQZoom.



Caribbean”

*(top)* Tabia in toto: The winning band when they appeared in New York last spring.

Tabia's Hubert Campbell.

credit: Willie Alleyne Associates /BTA

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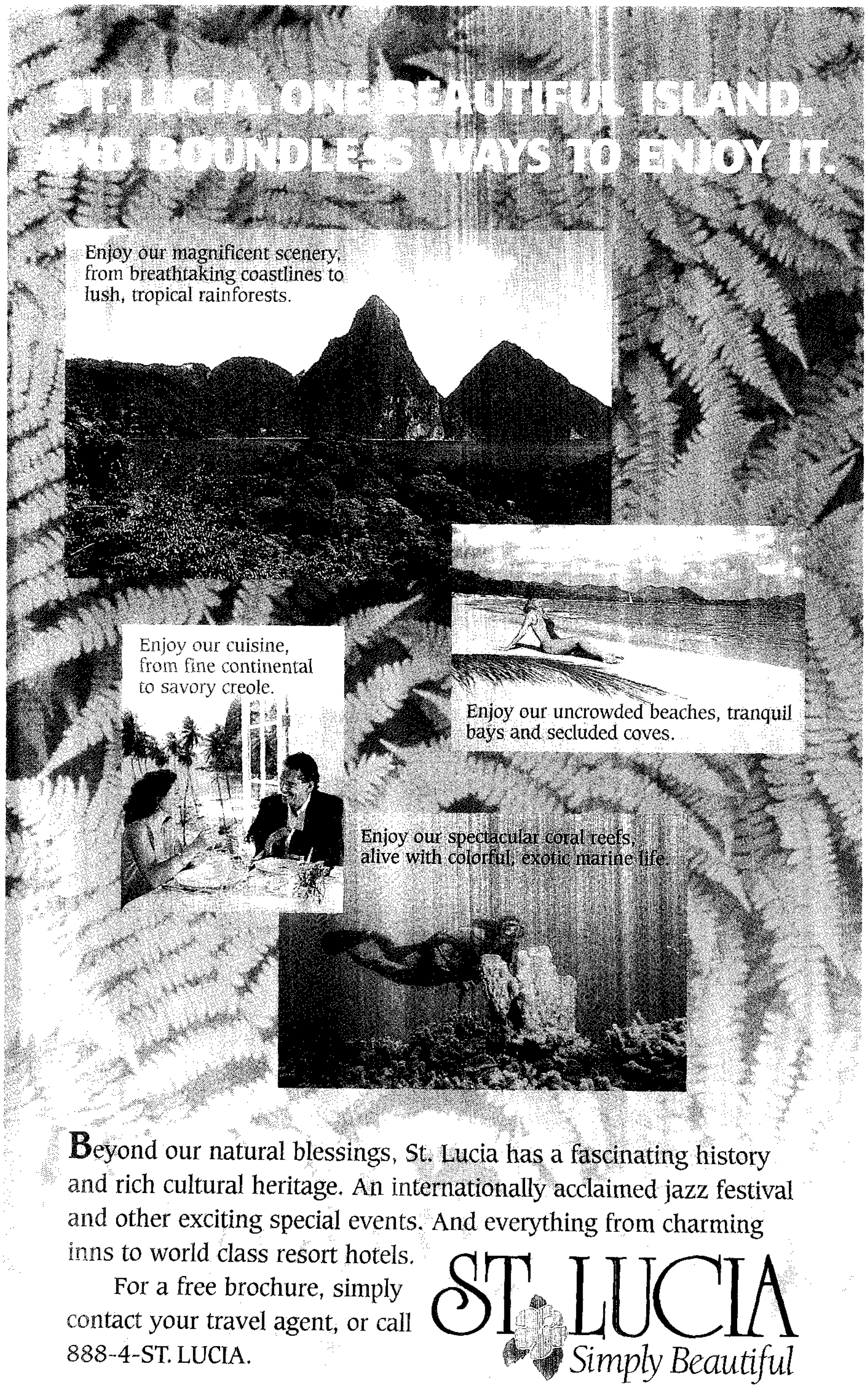
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# Caribbean Festivals Calendar

The celebration of festivals and carnivals is a Caribbean tradition—all work ceases and citizens take to the streets to rejoice in their culture and heritage. Costumes, dancing, parades, music, and food are the requisite ingredients. Each island's diversity is mirrored in its festivals and carnivals. The constant, however, is that a good time is guaranteed.

Below is a calendar crammed with upcoming Caribbean festivals and carnivals. Dates shown were given at press time, but should be confirmed with tourism offices listed here before you make your plans.

## 1996

### NOVEMBER

4-9 Pan Jazz Festival, **Trinidad**
Early November Festival of Puerto Rican Music, **Old San Juan, Puerto Rico**
16 Statia-America Day, **St. Eustatius (Statia)**
22 St. Cecilia's Day (Feast of the Musicians), **Guadeloupe**
25 Independence Day, **Suriname**
29 Thanksgiving Jump-Up, **St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands**
30-December 8 International Guitar Festival, **Martinique**

### DECEMBER

1 Bari Festival, **Bonaire**
6 Music in Steel, **British Virgin Islands**
6-8 Saba Days Mini Winter Carnival, **Saba**
8-January 6 Crucian Christmas Festival, **St. Croix, USVI**
14 Scratch/Fungi Band Fiesta, **British Virgin Islands**
Mid-month-January 1 Christmas Festival, **Montserrat**
26 Boxing Day Junkanoo Parade, Nassau, **The Islands Of The Bahamas**
26-January 2 Carnival, **St. Kitts**

## 1997

### JANUARY

1 Junkanoo Parade, **Nassau**
5 Sunday of Carnival preparations, **Guadeloupe**
5-19 St. Barts Music Festival, **St. Barts**
6 Three Kings Day, **Cancún, Cozumel**
8-12 Barbados Jazz Festival, **Barbados**
11 Calypsonian Contest and Road March Contest, **Aruba**
Late month Tumba Contest, **Aruba**
20-24 Tumba Festival, **Curaçao**
23-26 St. Croix Blues Heritage Festival, **St. Croix, USVI**

### FEBRUARY

1-11 Carnival, **St. Lucia, Dominica, Trinidad and Tobago, Bonaire**
5-11 Carnival, **Ponce, Puerto Rico**
8-12 Carnival, **Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Martin**
9-11 Carnival, **Ambergris Caye, Belize**
10-11 Carnival, **Carriacou, Grenada**
11-12 Carnival, **St. Barts**

### MARCH

11-18 St. Patrick's Day week of celebrations, **Montserrat,** (17) **Grenada**
Late month Jamaica Carnival, **Jamaica**
23-30 Easter Week celebrations, **Cancún, Cozumel**
30 Simadan Festival, **Bonaire**

### APRIL

16-26 Carnival, **St. Thomas, USVI**
16-May 2 Carnival, **St. Maarten**
Late month Sugar Harvest Festival, **Puerto Rico**
27-May 5 De Congaline Festival, **Barbados**
30 Coronation/Queen's birthday, **Saba, St. Eustatius, Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St. Maarten**

### MAY

5 Cinco de Mayo, **Mexico**
8-11 St. Lucia Jazz Festival, **St. Lucia**
15-19 Caribana, **Barbuda**
Mid-month Caribbean Muzik Festival, **The Islands Of The Bahamas**
22-23 Cancún Jazz Festival, **Cancún**
23-25 Gospelfest, **Barbados**
29-June 1 Heineken JazzFest, **Puerto Rico**
30 Anguilla Day, **Anguilla**

### JUNE

2-22 Casals Festival, **San Juan, Puerto Rico**
3 African Festival, **St. Martin**
8-15 Jamaica Jazz Festival, **Jamaica**
Mid-month Police Week Calypso Competition, **Grenada**
21-30 Festival de Jazz à la Plantation, **Martinique**
24 St. John's Day, **Aruba**
27-July 8 VincyMas (St. Vincent Carnival), **St. Vincent**
28 Fun-in-the-Sun Festival, **Turks and Caicos**
29-August 4 Crop Over Festival, **Barbados**
Late month Jazz & Latin Music Festival, **Aruba;** Carnival (parade on July 4) **St. John, USVI**

## JULY

7-13 Festival du Gwo Ka (Big Drums), **Guadeloupe**
7-23 Festival of Fort-de-France, **Martinique**
16-28 Carnival, **Statia**
Mid-month Merengue Festival, **Dominican Republic;** Jamaican Popular Song Contest, **Jamaica**
Late month Song Festival, **Grenada;** Heritage Festival, **Tobago;** Domfesta, **Dominica**
24-27 St. Maarten Music and Cultural Festival, **St. Maarten**
25-August 9 Emancipation Festival Celebration, **British Virgin Islands**
28-August 4 Summer Festival, **Saba**
28-August 5 Carnival, **Antigua**
31-August 3 Reggae Sunsplash, **St. Anns, Jamaica**
31-August 5 Culturama, **Nevis**

## AUGUST

Early month Salsa Festival, **Curaçao;** Carnival, **Anguilla**
4-6 August Festival Days, **BVI**
5-9 Reggae Sumfest, **Montego Bay, Jamaica**
8-12 Carnival, **Grenada**
10-15 Festival du Marin, **Martinique**
12-17 International Sea & Air Festival, **Belize**

## SEPTEMBER

6 Bonaire Day, **Bonaire**
21 Independence Day, **Belize**
24-October 11 Inter-American Festival of the Arts, **San Juan, Puerto Rico**
Monthlong CayFest, National Festival of the Arts, **Cayman Islands**

## OCTOBER

2-5 Antigua Jazz Festival, **Antigua**
3-4 Curaçao Jazz Festival, **Curaçao**
Late month Golden Artists Music Festival, **Curaçao;** Pirates Week, **Cayman Islands;** Merengue Festival, **Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic**
30-November 2 International Music Festival, **Belize**

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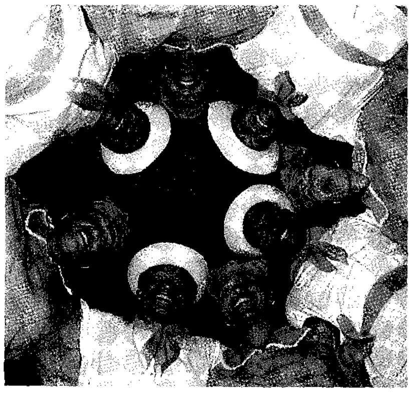
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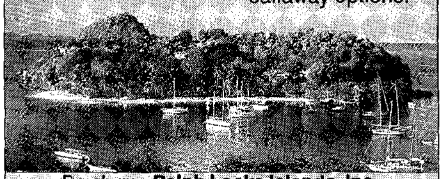

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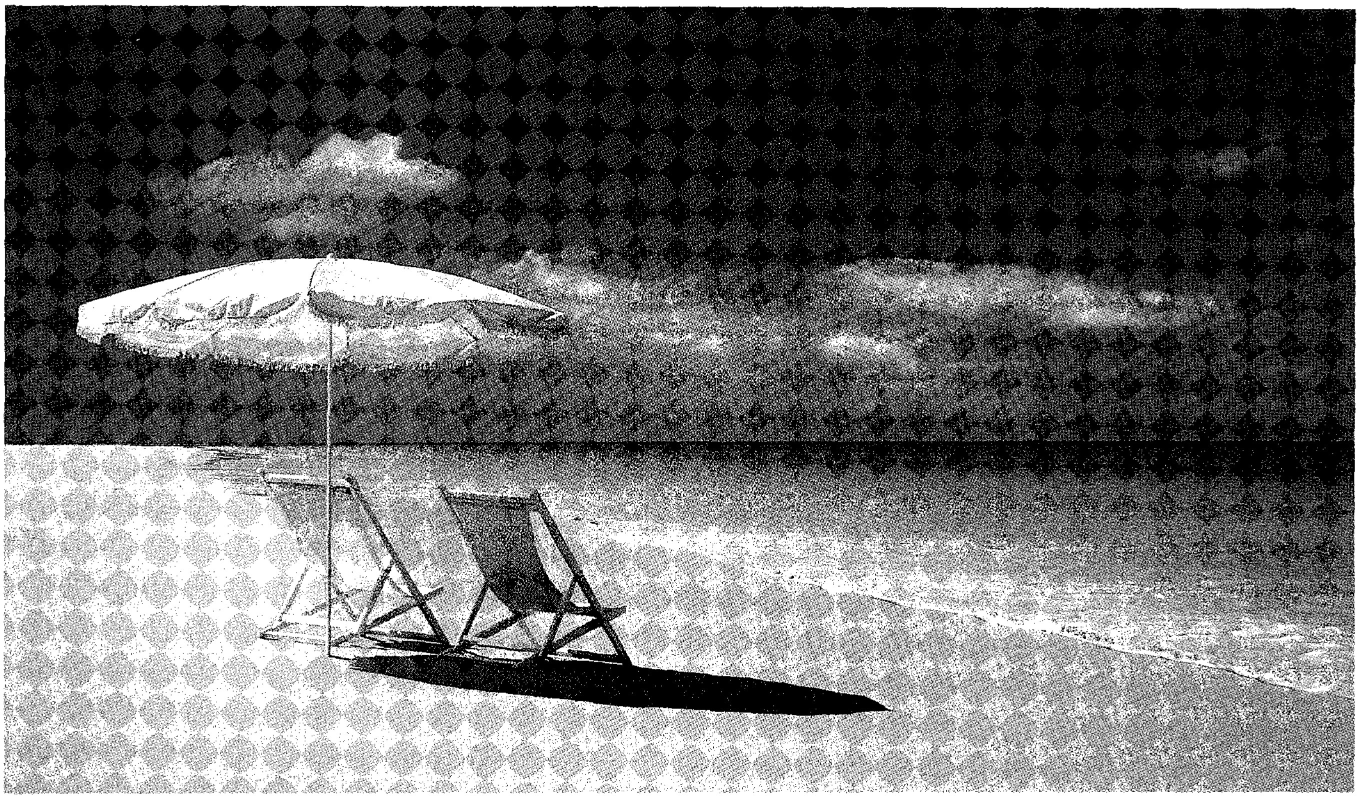

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THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

# IRE IN THE BELLY

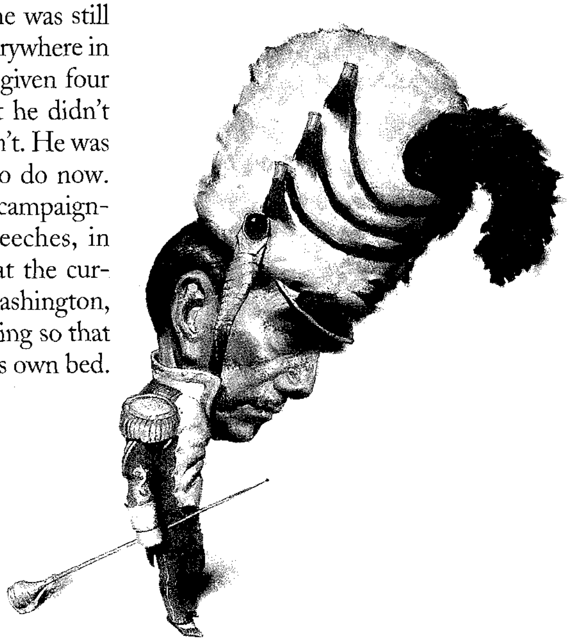
*The final offensive of the ultimate protest candidate.*

BY MICHAEL KELLY

It was around sunset on the day before Halloween, a cloudy, windy evening in New Orleans, and Bob Dole was giving his second, and final, speech of the day. In his position—there were five days to go until the election, and he was still trailing Bill Clinton almost everywhere in the country—he should have given four or five speeches that day. But he didn't want to do that, and so he hadn't. He was doing only what he wanted to do now. The day before, he had quit campaigning, again after only two speeches, in midafternoon, in order to beat the curfew at National Airport, in Washington, to which he insisted on returning so that he could spend the night in his own bed. His advisers had protested, but he had ignored them. "National, here we come!" Dole had shouted gleefully as he left his second speech in Denver to rush to the airport.

Dole was ignoring his advisers in other ways as well. His senior staff members were united in the belief that it was crucial for him to go out of the 1996 race on an upbeat note, offering voters an affirmative reason to choose him over Clinton. Every day, the campaign provided Dole with a positive, issues-oriented speech. The advance texts of these speeches were dutifully put up on the teleprompter and handed out to reporters. Sometimes Dole delivered the speeches, but more often he didn't. He used whatever he wanted from them and discarded the rest. He said, it seemed, whatever he pleased, whatever popped into his mind. What pleased him most was to rail against Clinton, so that was what Dole was going to do, no matter what his advisers said.

Standing on the stage at the Pontchartrain Center, in the suburbs of New Orleans, he faced a relatively small crowd that, as usual, had been wedged into an even smaller space to look large. He rambled and harangued and exhorted. He grinned grimly as he spoke, and he had a look about him that was faintly odd. Dole has always been a lean man, and the rigors of campaigning seemed to have slimmed him further, to a point approaching gaunt. His cheeks were hollow, almost sunken, advertising the fact of his seventy-three years. But they were also tanned, almost umber. The disjunction in Dole's appearance echoed in his words.



*Dole turned inward, toward himself—the only adviser he has ever really listened to.*

DANIEL ADEL

"I'll tell them the truth, and they'll think it's hell," he said. "How about that? That's what Truman did, and he won, too. Remember, he was behind in the polls, and he won. Keep your eye on me. I'm going to be the second Harry Truman. You watch and see. . . . Now, remember, this is one of my home states, because a long time ago I was at Camp Polk, Louisiana, marching around there in the summertime. Boy, it was hot. It was hot. Even when you're twenty years

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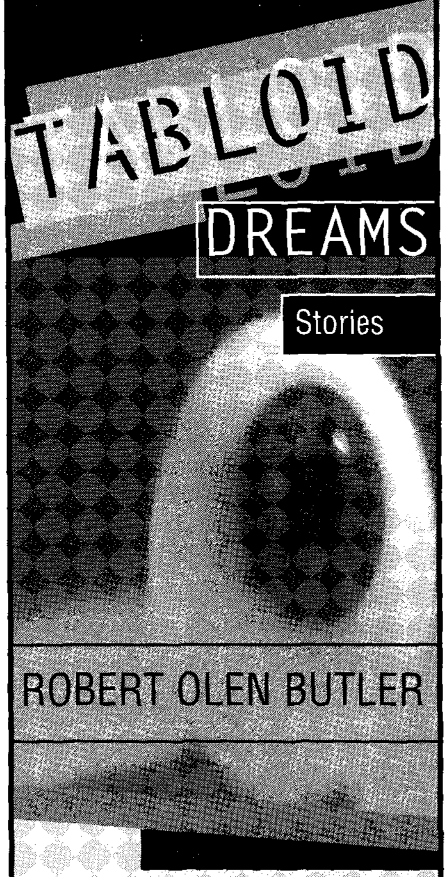

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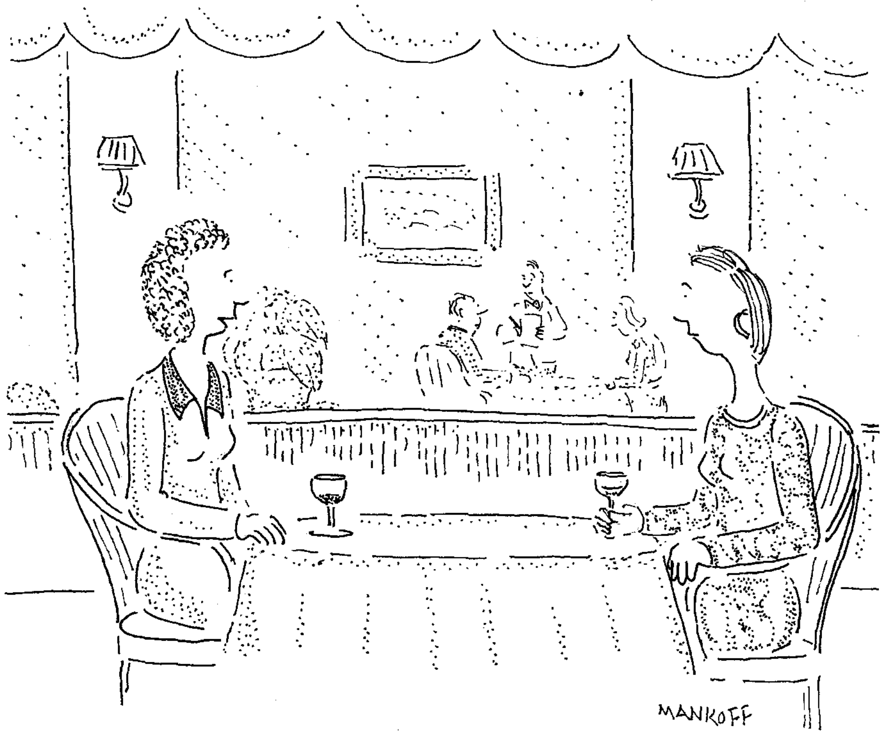

*"At this point, my privacy needs are interfering with my intimacy goals."*

• •

old, it was hot. But I learned a lot. I finally found the base. I got lost for a few hours. But Clinton's been lost all his life. I was only lost a few hours. And if he were here today you could join his retirement party right here. . . . This is D Day. This is decision day. November 5, not far away. . . . I've always kept my word. And my colleagues in the Congress or wherever else I've been, regardless of their political affiliation or party affiliation, will tell you that Bob Dole keeps his word. Bob Dole keeps his word. Keeps his word. And I know that there are some who say that character doesn't make any difference, that the public trust doesn't make any difference, that when you're President of the United States you can do everything you can get away with, when you're in the White House nobody cares. I don't believe it for a moment. I don't believe it for a moment. We're going to find out on November 5."

As Dole was speaking, his campaign manager, Scott Reed, stood behind a blue curtain that made the backdrop for the stage, listening with half an ear to the candidate and ruminating on the final days of a nearly lost cause. Dole had accepted, Reed said, that he was most likely not going to win. "I give him the polling number every morning, and I give him the electoral strategy every morning," he said. "And I have told him—I tell him every morning—I say, 'It looks like we may not win.' And he says, 'You're right.' "

Reed shook his head, and went on, "The truth is, nothing has changed for a long time. Four or five months. We were never able to jolt the race. We thought we jolted it when he left the Senate. Then we thought we jolted it with our Convention. But we didn't, and we had a string of bad luck. The Clinton train trip was very successful, moved a lot of votes. Then came Saddam Hussein. Boom! Knocked us out of the news for seven days. Then Congress gives Clinton everything he wants. Boom! Knocks us down again. Then the Middle East blows up. Boom! Knocks us out of the news for four days. Every time we turned around—boom!—we're knocked on our ass." He paused, then added, "And it's hard to jolt a race against those guys. They're very, very good. Their negative ads were very successful, drove us into the ground. They shaped this race—they really did. They made it Dole-Gingrich and Medicare."

But if Dole knew that it was nearly impossible for him to win he still believed there was a chance, Reed said. Every losing Presidential campaign has its forlorn hope. Usually, it is a tactical hope—that their voters will turn out in vast numbers and the other side's will stay home, that the precise, magical combination of states will all fall together to pick the electoral lock. Dole shared that hope, of course (politicians are gamblers, and while they believe devoutly in the odds, they also believe in the million-to-one shot coming home), but his larger dream was much more personal. He believed that at the last minute millions of voters would look at the choice facing them and would suddenly decide that they could not vote for a dishonest man over an honest one. This was always the bottom-line strategy of the Dole campaign, and the fact that it had never been realized was a mystery to Dole. (It was also a mystery to George Bush, who tried and failed with the same approach against Clinton in 1992.) By this point, most of the people around Dole no longer believed in the hope—no longer believed that Dole had any real chance of winning—but Dole would not let it go. It wasn't really even about winning. He refused to accept that a man he regarded as a routine liar—a man he believed most voters regarded as a routine liar—was entitled to beat him. He would rant and rail, against all advice, because it simply galled him too much not to. "This is his campaign, and he's going to finish it the way he wants to," Reed said. "And nobody is going to stop him."

BOB DOLE'S campaign for President was, in a sense, always a protest campaign: Dole's protest against everything—the culture of politics, the culture of his country, the values of a nation that appreciated a man like Clinton more than a man like Dole. And it was a protest against the business of campaigning itself. Dole always ran in a state of agitation against what he was doing every day, as if he were determined to have an opponent worthy of himself: himself. A successful campaigner is like a donkey on a treadmill. He does what he is supposed to do when he is supposed to do it, he masters the essential arguments of his side, he stays on message, he works sixteen hours a day, he obeys the advice of his aides. When political consultants talk about their favorite clients, their ideal campaigners, what they talk about are people who, as they say, take direction well. Nobody has ever taken political direction better than Clinton: he governs by it. Dole never took direction at all. He never learned to accept the standard relationship between the candidate and his manager, which is akin to the relationship between a defendant and his lawyer. And Dole never mastered the sloganeering of his side, let alone the core intellectual arguments. His formula for convincing voters of the validity of his plan for a fifteen-per-cent tax cut was emblematic of his entire approach. "If you have the will, you can do it," he would say. "I have the will and I can do it." It wasn't a defense of the tax-cut plan but an eccentric, quixotic refusal to defend the plan: Take me on trust, or don't take me at all.

Normally, in a Presidential campaign the candidate travels with at least three or four senior advisers. Most of the time, Dole travelled with one senior adviser—his press secretary, Nelson Warfield. The other people on the plane were mere functionaries, and they were, in terms of Dole, children: political novices who were forty or fifty years younger than the Senator. "He insisted on controlling the manifest, so he could control the road operation, so you had all along a plane operation that was kept separate from the rest of the campaign—it was just Dole and his press secretary and the kids," one senior staff member said. "And, obviously, having a Presidential operation run in such a fashion that the most senior person on the plane is the press secretary is not how successful campaigns have been waged previously."

What Dole did in the last days of his run was the logical, final extension of his protest. Deeply frustrated, he turned completely away from his staff, and inward, toward himself—the only adviser he has ever really listened to—and waged what one senior campaign official called "a renegade campaign," running as much against his own operation as against Clinton. His staff gave him the usual advice given to losing candidates in the final stretch. "We all had the same desire, to have Dole speaking positively, not succumbing to the irresistible temptation to continually comment on Clinton's ethical woes—to go out classy," the campaign official said. "But it was as if he just said to himself, 'It's the final goddam weeks and I'm going to do this the way I think I can win, and to hell with what anyone else says.' "

Dole's speeches as he entered the last week of his campaign were Dole un-

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trammelled. He abandoned any pretense of formal structure. He spoke in phrases and fragments that interrupted one another at his whim, like a call-waiting system gone awry, non sequitur giving way to non sequitur. Sometimes he seemed lost in his utterances, wandering through the boneyard of his mind, picking up an idea here, waving it for a moment, dropping it for another a few feet away.

"We learned in our little home town—I see other home towns represented here today—to keep our word," he said in Denver. "We also learned not to say four-letter words. My mother always had a bar of soap handy for that. But, in any event, we learned a lot. We learned about honesty, integrity, and generosity and love and your family, and honor and duty and country—all these basic things we want to teach our children, we learned. That's what this election is all about."

When he lit upon a word or a phrase that struck him as especially important, he would yell it out two or three, or even four, times in a row. "You are the polls! You are the polls! You are the polls right here!" he hollered at a crowd in western Tennessee. "The federal government is too big and spends too much of your money. Your money! Your money! Your money!"

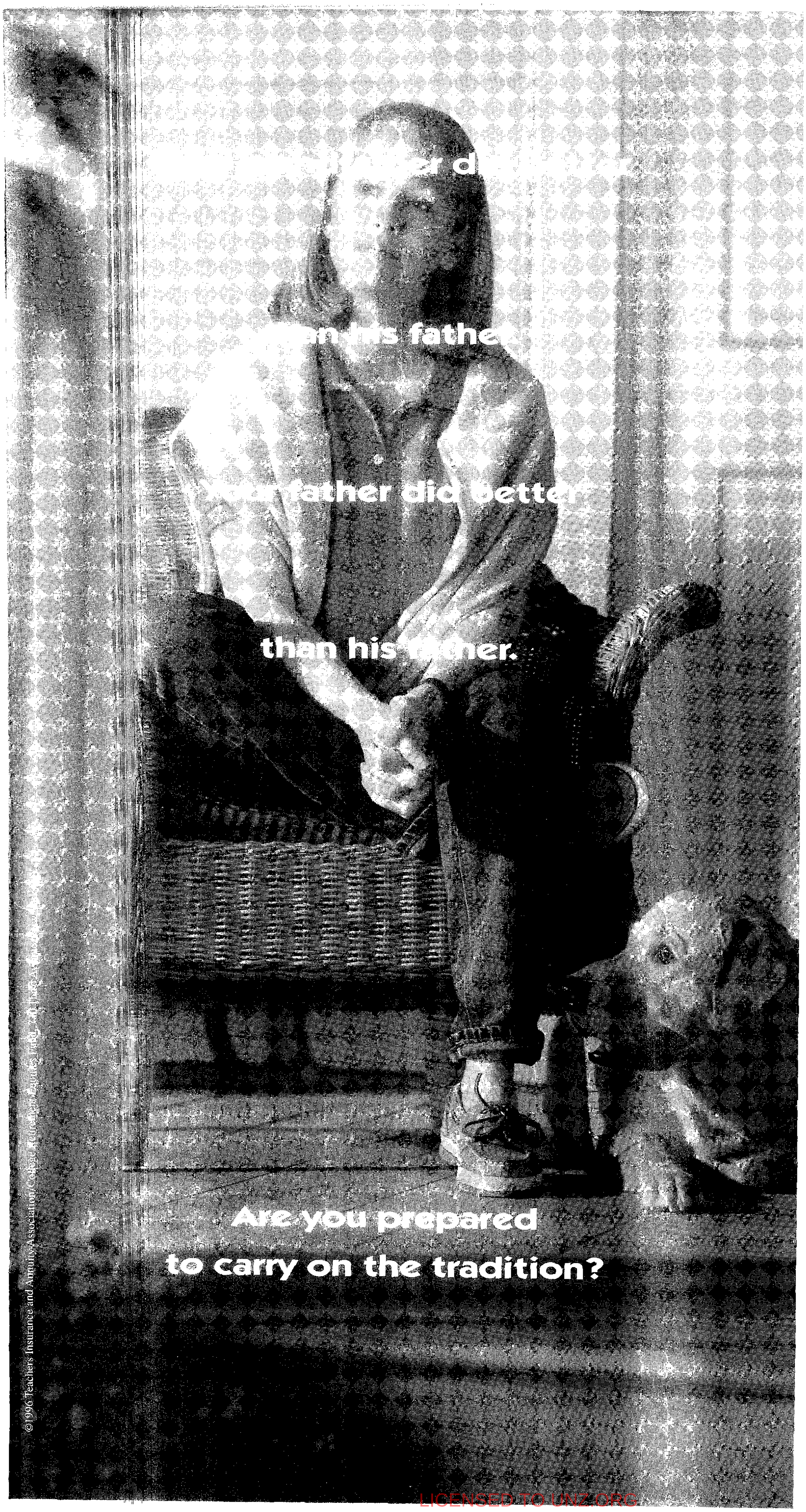
But then in the same speech, and sometimes in the same paragraph, he would slide suddenly into the groove—into a funny, evocative riff, slashing Clinton's White House for its scandals. He would imitate the former White House security chief Craig Livingstone "down in the White House basement, drinking a beer," and calling for another round—"Set 'em up, boys. Have another beer!"—as he amused himself with F.B.I. files. Or he would conjure up a picture of Al Gore pocketing "a hundred and twenty-two thousand dollars" at a Democratic fund-raiser in a Buddhist temple—"the Buddhist temple in Los Angeles, where you take a vow of poverty," he marvelled in a California speech. "Creative. Innovative. There must be a laundromat next door. I wouldn't be surprised to see them holding fund-raisers in homeless shelters, the way this money is coming in."

As the campaign entered its last few days, it achieved, finally, a sort of Dolean purity—a state of perfect antic formlessness. On Thursday morning, with four days to go, Dole, after deliberating with Reed on Wednesday night, made his last big decision as he was preparing to leave Tampa: to throw himself and his campaign into a final ninety-six-hour marathon of campaigning, winging across the country, making it up as he went along. "At that point, Scott Reed called us here, and said, 'It's on, put it together,' " a somewhat harried Dole campaign adviser in Washington said. "The official start is noon Friday. Between then and 1 A.M. on Saturday, there will be nine stops. Between Saturday morning and midnight Saturday, there will be another eight stops, ending in Las Vegas. Dole leaves Las Vegas for San Diego at 5 A.M. Sunday, and we don't have it mapped out from there, but my guess is there will be four or five stops in California, and then sometime Monday morning they will fly from California and hopscotch their way east, probably hitting Phoenix, Albuquerque—get into Russell, Kansas, late Monday night."

There was a kind of beauty in it all, a rare pleasure in seeing, in the age of triangulated politics, a candidate who had come so thoroughly apart from his packaging. But such a creature couldn't expect to fare very well against the most perfectly packaged candidate anyone had ever seen. The funny and sad thing is that it was, in the end, the breathtaking depth of Clinton's cynicism that fired Dole's last hope. The Dole adviser said, "It is not so much a feeling of 'I can't believe I am losing to this guy' as it is 'I can't believe a guy who is this much a phony and who has this sheer magnitude of ethical scandals all around him is going to be able to pull this election off.' " And it was this emotion that drove Dole forward with a freedom, and even a kind of joy, in his final days.

His own people were saying that it probably wouldn't be enough against Clinton. Still, it would be closer than most people expected, the adviser said. The campaign's polls showed the race had finally begun to significantly tighten. "We're heading toward beating Bush in percentage, in electoral vote, and in the number of state victories," he said. "We're heading for a very respectable loss."

The adviser laughed. "It's renegade perversity against effective cynicism. And effective cynicism will mow down renegade perversity every time." ♦



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LIFE AND LETTERS

# GOD AND HARVARD

*Harvard's Peter Gomes is a conservative clergyman who says that the religious right is wrong. And the Bible is his evidence.*

BY ROBERT S. BOYNTON

On a rainy Friday afternoon in November, 1991, a few hundred students gathered on the steps of Harvard's Memorial Church. That Monday, copies of an incendiary "special double issue" of *Peninsula*, a conservative undergraduate magazine, had been distributed across the campus. The issue was devoted to homosexuality, and it cited Pavlov, Freud, and the Bible to characterize "gay life" as "immoral" and "pitiable." The next day, a gay student in Lowell House found the word "FAGGOT" scrawled in nine-inch letters on his door. By week's end, a meeting had been called to protest such incidents of apparent bigotry on a campus that most people had assumed was as tolerant as it was élite.

After several students and administrators denounced *Peninsula*, the minister of Memorial Church, Peter J. Gomes, offered a religious perspective. His conservative credentials were impeccable: he delivered the benediction at President Reagan's second Inauguration and the sermon at President Bush's Inauguration and had landed on the "wrong" side of several campus debates, divestment from South Africa, for one. So it was unclear what position he would take on the vexed question of homosexuality and the Bible.

The crowd fell silent as the Reverend Gomes began to speak. "Gay people are victims *not* of the Bible, *not* of religion, and *not* of the church, but of people who use religion as a way to devalue and deform those whom they can neither ignore nor convert," he said. He let the audience know that he spoke about this issue with ample theological authority: as the minister of Memorial Church, as the Plummer Professor of Christian Morals, and, finally, as "a Christian who happens as well to be gay." The explosion of cheers and applause at Gomes's revelation lasted well over a minute. He continued, "These realities, which are unreconcilable to some, are reconciled in me by a loving God, a living Saviour, a moving, breathing, healthy Holy Spirit whom I know intimately and who knows me."

News of Gomes's "coming out" spread quickly. The next day, on returning from a meeting of the Mayflower Society, he found the entrance to Sparks House—Harvard's parsonage—blocked by hundreds of notes and bundles of flowers. Meanwhile, a group called Concerned Christians at Harvard demanded his resignation and held a candlelight vigil in order to hasten it. It was not long before the national media picked up Gomes's story; there were articles in the Washington *Post* and *Time*, and appearances on "Nightline." Lost in all the commotion was the fact that Gomes had little desire to be known as Harvard's "homosexual chaplain," or to become a "gay activist"—a term he abhors. Cautious and conservative by nature, he was a reluctant revolutionary; in the text of his speech he had bracketed the sentence that declared his homosexuality, in case he wanted to skip over it at the last second. "I don't like being the main exhibit, but this was an unusual set of circumstances, in that I felt I had a particular resource that nobody else there possessed," he says. "I have no regrets, but when I saw all the flowers and cards I thought, Oh shit, I must have done something *horrible!*"

In fact, Gomes had simply added another qualifier to his distinctive persona. Gomes, now fifty-four, is a conservative, black, gay Republican; a Baptist minister with "an Anglican over-soul," who was named one of America's "star" preachers by *Time*. He is a former Secretary of the Pilgrim Society and an honorary fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and his mien owes as much to nineteenth-century England as it does to twentieth-century America. When he is not in clerical garb, he favors three-piece charcoal-gray suits, rep ties, a pocket watch and fob, and a starched white handkerchief, which he tucks into his left coat sleeve. He alternates between pipes and cigars and is rarely seen outdoors without a hat. His rich baritone is three parts James Earl Jones, one part John Houseman. From

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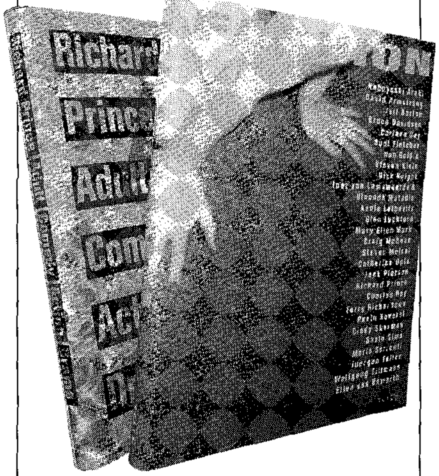

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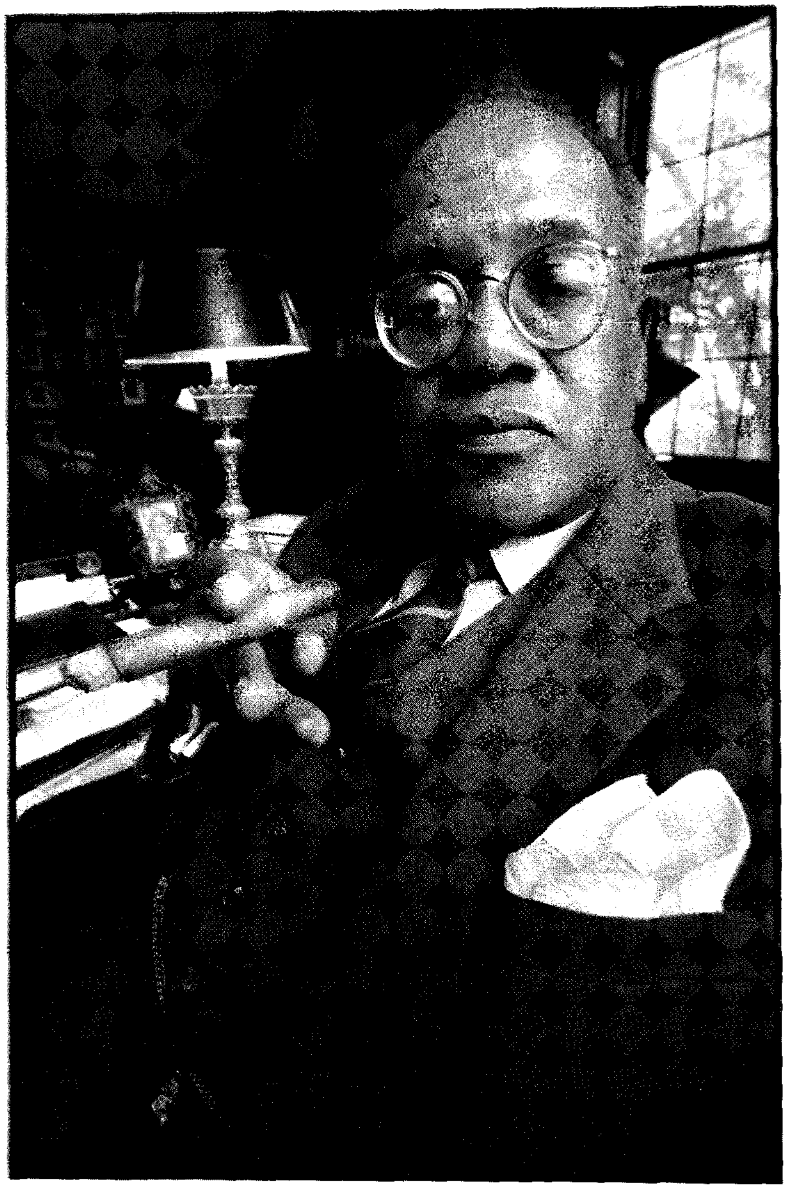
Freshman Sunday to the benediction at commencement, his is the first and last official voice that every Harvard student hears, and one of the few whose words are likely to be remembered.

In a quarter century at Harvard, Gomes has assumed the role of the university's bard, dutifully proclaiming its history and honoring its hallowed traditions. During Wednesday-afternoon teas, Sunday sermons, and festive garden parties, Gomes never tires of reminding students of what Harvard's Puritan founder hoped for the university: that it become the New Jerusalem, a moral beacon in a sinful and fallen world. "Peter fears that the acids of modernity will dissolve Harvard's sense of tradition, and he has taken up the mantle of one who interprets and extends it to newcomers," Ronald Thiemann, the dean of the Divinity School, says. Henry Rosovsky, who has twice been the acting president of Harvard and was the dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, describes Gomes's role similarly: "As Harvard has become larger and more bureaucratized, he is one of the few university-wide citizens who still communicate with everybody."

It's clear that Gomes's personal charm has served both him and Harvard well. The actor John Lithgow, who is a former Harvard trustee, calls him "a completely magnetic and open man," and he adds, "The first time I met him, I felt as if I had known him my whole life." Deval Patrick, the Assistant Attorney General for civil rights, was an undergraduate at Harvard in the race-conscious seventies, and recalls that Gomes used to refer to himself jokingly as an "Afro-Saxon," in order to underscore the widely different identities available to black students. "In being so relentlessly himself, he creates the most unlikely allegiances, whether they be with Prince Charles or a kid from the South Side of Chicago."



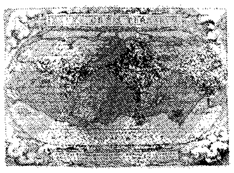
*Peter Gomes at Sparks House: Presidential Inaugurations aside, his descent into politics has been a gradual one. Photograph by Bruce Davidson.*

The temptation to reduce Gomes to any one of his institutional, racial, sexual, religious, or political affiliations is almost as overwhelming as the temptation to cubbyhole him as an eccentric, multicultural hybrid. "The oddest thing about being an oddity is that there are very few oddities like you," he says. Gomes then relates what I later realize is a parable about the dangers of failing to appreciate his deep New England roots as a "black Yankee"—one of those African-Americans whose forebears have lived in the region since the eighteenth century. It seems that when Elliott Perkins, the great-grandson of John Quincy Adams, was an undergraduate at Harvard, he decided to become better acquainted with George Washington Lewis, the formidable black steward of the Porcellian Club: "So one day Elliott began to make conversation and asked, 'Mr. Lewis, when did your people come up North?' To which Lewis replied, 'Mr. Perkins, my great-grandfather fought in the Battle of Bennington, which is in Vermont, *as you may know*.' " After we share a laugh at poor old Perkins's faux pas, Gomes scrutinizes me and says, "I certainly hope I never say anything as stupid as *that*." He means, of course, that he hopes *I* don't.

It is late afternoon on the first Sunday of the term, and Gomes is relaxing in his elegant study, smoking one of his beloved Griffin cigars. This morning, he preached to a church full of Harvard freshmen, who will graduate in the year 2000 ("the class of oughty-ought," in Gomes parlance). In his sermon, he compared their predicament with that of the Jews of Exodus, who when they arrived in the land of milk and honey were disappointed by what they found. "After the novelties of Harvard Yard have worn off and you have met the twenty-fifth valedictorian, the fiftieth varsity rower, and scads more 'interesting people,' some of you will discover that the promised land can be rather tedious, and will *long* for the fleshpots of Egypt," he intoned.

After church, Gomes held a five-course luncheon at Sparks House to commemorate Dean Thiemann's first decade at Harvard. It was a stately affair, and between courses of sole with puffed dill mousseline and crème brûlée with Cointreau, Gomes was the consummate host, puckishly assuring each guest that he or she had "been seated next to the most fascinating person here."

Sparks is a yellow clapboard house, nestled incongruously beside several large academic buildings. It is surrounded by a well-tended English garden, which Gomes designed, and is filled with rugs, ornaments, books, antique furniture, and landscape paintings, which he has spent a



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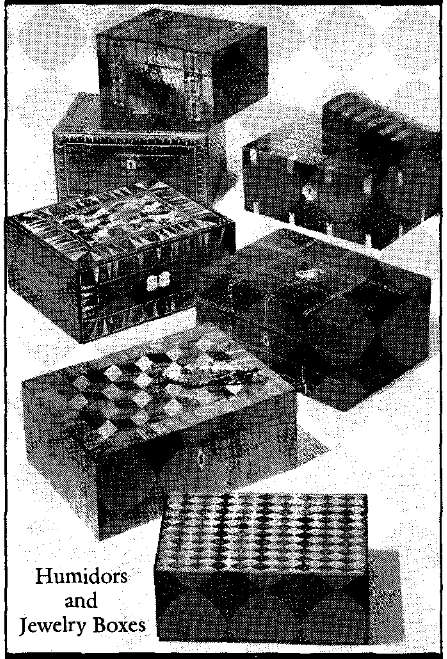

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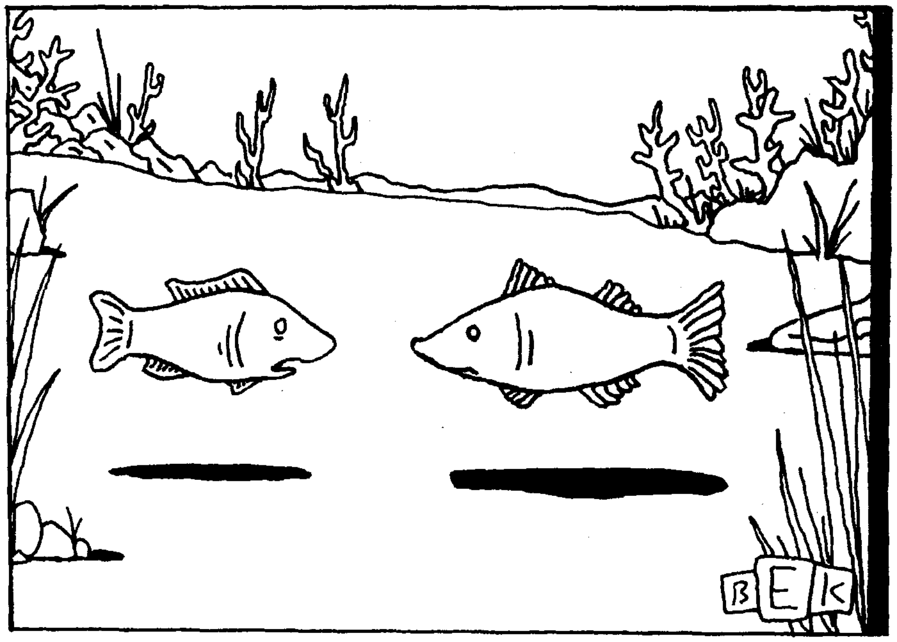
lifetime collecting. Marble busts of Greek and Roman dignitaries peek out from the tops of bookshelves, staid Oriental rugs cover the floors, and small framed prints of English clergymen and literary figures dot the walls. A grand piano separates the dining room from the enormous drawing room, and on it sit pictures of Gomes at state occasions with George Bush, Ronald Reagan, and others. "Those are there to offend my liberal friends," he says, mischievously. "I got such *grief* when I prayed for Reagan—it was as if I had come out for the sterilization of American youth. I finally decided it was ludicrous and said, 'Just think how bad things would have been if I *hadn't* prayed for him!' "

Presidential Inaugurations aside, Gomes's descent into politics has been a gradual one. Since the controversy surrounding his coming out, he has entered the fray only infrequently, lending his name to select causes, writing the occasional editorial on an issue of note. Referring to the military's historic uneasiness with integration, he wrote in the *Times*, "If the generals were so wrong about race in 1948, why should we think today's generals know any more about sexuality in 1993?" This month, with the publication by William Morrow of "The Good Book," an engaging study of the purported Biblical roots of homophobia, sexism, anti-Semitism, racism, and other prejudices, Gomes fulfills his larger promise. Both a Biblical primer and a critique of the religious right, "The Good Book" is intended for the vast group of secular Americans who have only a passing acquaintance with the Scriptures but want to know more; Lord Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury, touts it as "easily the best contemporary book on the Bible for thoughtful people." Given the other Good Book's status as a perennial best-seller, Gomes's publishers have high hopes for his, which they reportedly acquired for more than three hundred thousand dollars in a heated bidding war. When I ask what he intends to do with so much money ("Wealth is not a sin, but it is a problem," he writes in "The Good Book"), he smiles broadly and summons his best Old Testament growl: "My dear man. Jesus saves, but Moses *invests*."

Gomes says that he wrote "The Good Book" out of dismay at our culture's wholesale ignorance of the Bible; one survey found that ten per cent of Americans thought Joan of Arc was Noah's wife, and that thirty-eight per cent believe the New and Old Testaments were written immediately after Jesus' death. But even more disturbing than this lack of knowledge, he adds, is the fact that the only group addressing it is the religious right. "For the past twenty years, the mainstream church has been so busy ending the war and constructing the good society that it has abdicated its role as keeper of the Bible," he says. "The religious right filled that vacuum. I admire them in that they affirm the kind of Biblical literacy and piety which I believe ought to play a large role



*"I'd appreciate it if you talked to me without staring at my gills."*

in our culture. I don't disapprove of their impulses. They have a hunger and look to the Bible for answers that they can't find elsewhere. And that is the problem. They attribute to the Bible a kind of functional credibility that it was never designed to have. They idolize it."

Gomes argues against the zealous interpretative impulse that manifests itself in the sins he calls "Bibliolatry" and "literalism." To make the Bible the object of veneration is to ascribe to it a glory that should be reserved for God; to worship the literal text of the Scriptures is to make the letter superior to the spirit—and this error leads the literalists to apply God's Word in a mechanistic, unreflective manner. A further temptation, afflicting the religious left as well as the religious right, is the lure of what he calls "culturalism," which uses passages of the Bible to legitimatize prevailing mores.

In order to avoid these interpretative pitfalls, Gomes advocates a holistic approach that looks beyond the Bible to the larger truths of the Christian faith—religious principles that transcend both the historical context of the original writers and the prejudices of contemporary interpreters. "The Good Book" is ultimately a meditation on the difficulty of balancing the competing demands of Biblical piety and modern realities. What sets it apart from more partisan attempts to reconcile the secular and the sacred is Gomes's keen sense of what is at stake; namely, the authority of the Bible as our culture's most potent sacred symbol, and its relevance to the good life, however we may seek it.

Gomes's scholarly critiques of Biblical hermeneutics speak directly to the most contentious political debates of our time. The oft-cited Biblical injunction "Thou shalt not kill," for example, may not be as applicable to abortion as its opponents believe; Gomes points out that the Hebrew original ("Thou shalt do no *murder*") complicates a literalist reading. "There are many valid and moral extra-biblical grounds for opposition to abortion, but the literal, and commonsense, reading of Exodus 20:13 renders a weak and inadequate proof text against it," Gomes concludes.

More often than not, contemporary interpreters treat the Bible as a "spiritual trampoline," in Gomes's view, using Scripture to advance a partisan reading tailored for a particular audience. In contrast to this exclusionary practice, he argues that the Bible is a thoroughly inclusive book, that it engages us precisely because it is filled with the stories of ordinary people who are very much like us—"people who are confused and confusing, who are less than exemplary but who nevertheless participate in a developing encounter with God," he writes. For Gomes, the Bible is not a book of history, theology, or philosophy but, rather, the authoritative account of the dynamic relationship between man and God.

Borrowing from Celtic mythology, Gomes discusses those "thin places" where the visible and the invisible worlds come into contact. For him, the Bible is a guide to such thin places, which may be places of worship—monasteries, temples, mosques—or areas of conflict, such as Northern Ireland, South Africa, and the Middle East. In short, they are likely to be found where the suffering has been greatest and where those who have been marginalized and excluded happen to dwell—a circumstance in which Gomes finds reason for hope. In "The Good Book," it's clear that Gomes is offering far more than a reading intended to find a hospitable place for minorities in the Bible; he is offering a bold theological argument. "The place for creative hope that arises out of suffering is most likely now to be found among blacks, women, and homosexuals," he writes. "These outcasts may well be the custodians of those thin places; they may in fact be the watchers at the frontier between what is and what is to be."

In arguing the importance of the role played by those custodians of thin places, Gomes finds the use of the Bible to condemn homosexuality to be an instance of a spurious literalism. Given that the word "homosexual" was not invented until the nineteenth century, he argues that a crucial element has been garbled in the translation from ancient text to modern sensibility. Gomes explains that when the Apostle Paul supposedly denounced homosexuality in the Epistle to the Romans ("Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error"), all he knew was its most debauched, pagan version. "The biblical writers never contemplated a form of homosexuality in which loving, monogamous, and faithful persons sought to live out the implications of the gospel with as much fidelity to it as any heterosexual believer," Gomes writes. "All they knew of homosexuality was prostitution, pederasty, lasciviousness, and exploitation. These vices, as we know, are not unknown among heterosexuals, and to

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define contemporary homosexuals only in these terms is a cultural slander of the highest order."

Though Gomes has occasionally visited a gay bar, he hasn't really explored the culture of homosexuality. Indeed, he is skeptical about whether such a thing exists. "There has been a feverish effort to construct a notion of a homosexual life style," he says between puffs on his cigar. "Does it mean one likes disco music and Bette Davis? Is it what Oscar Wilde did, or what was done in pre-AIDS San Francisco? I tend to be very suspicious of those who proffer descriptions of homosexuals in much the same way that one would describe the Inuit." But then, he says, he is hardly the right person to ask for a definition; with his crushing work schedule and busy social life, Gomes has neither the time nor the inclination for romantic entanglement. "I do not *have* a partner, I have never *had* a partner, and I don't expect *ever* to have one," he says with mock bluster. "I have been in love only once, and that was with a woman whom I loved in principle but not in fact. I think I am vocationally called to the single life."

The grandson of a Baptist preacher, Gomes was always expected to become a man of the cloth. On Sunday afternoons as a child in Plymouth, he would retreat to the basement to play church, repeating that morning's sermon ("with considerable improvements," his mother would say) while standing behind a pulpit he had fashioned from cranberry boxes. Gomes's mother, the former Orissa White, came from a family that was a pillar of Boston's black aristocracy; born on Beacon Hill, she was a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music and became the first black woman to work in the Massachusetts State House, where she was a principal clerk. His father was born in the Cape Verde Islands and was a student at a Catholic monastery; when he was fifteen, he and his father moved to Plymouth, where the cranberry bogs drew laborers from around the world. One of Peter Gomes's earliest memories is of watching his father—who knew Portugese, Spanish, and English—compose letters for old men to send back to the islands. "He would read a letter in Portuguese and the man hearing it would reply as if he were having a conversation with the author," he says.

Gomes's parents met one day while his mother was on a drive in the country and stopped to tour an elaborate vegetable garden that Peter's father had cultivated near the bog. For him, it was love at first sight; after a few tentative letters, he started taking the train into Boston, and then walking all the way from South Station to Cambridge to court her. Orissa White—then forty years old and, Peter says, "a professional old maid"—wasn't inclined to marry anyone, and certainly not a cranberry farmer who lived in the country; but eventually his charm and good looks won her over. "If a woman of my mother's background and a man of my father's background asked me to marry them, I would tell them that it would never work," Gomes says. "Fortunately, my parents didn't ask me."

It is often commented that Peter Gomes was born an old man and has since grown progressively younger. An only child, he was raised in a distinctly Victorian household, where he enjoyed his parents' full attention; in exchange, he was expected to be an exemplary son and was treated like a "little adult" from his earliest years. Despite the family's modest means, no expense was spared on his education: there were piano lessons, excursions to Boston's museums, geology kits, stamp sets. Every night, his mother would read to him from such authors as Dickens and Maupassant.

Just before he started first grade, his mother took him aside. "I never had the lecture most black children get about what to do if someone calls you a nigger," he says. "Instead, she told me, 'Whatever you do, remember that you are a son of kings.' She wanted me to know that I was descended from Zulus, and that even though this was a one-horse town and my ancestors didn't come over on the Mayflower I was *somebody*—I came from special people and was therefore accountable to them."

Gomes was an exceptional student and was consistently elected president of his class, where he was the only black student. A precocious child, he had a flair for running things: in the afternoons, he would stage elaborate plays in which he acted out *all* the roles, while the other children were forced to play the "part" of the audience. He also threw his energies into the church, where he preached his first sermon at the age of twelve. "I loved it for all the theatre and pageantry," he says. "Church for me was what the basketball court is to most black kids: a place where my imagination was unleashed and I was given free rein on a stage."

Gomes's mother was a deeply religious woman who played the organ and di-

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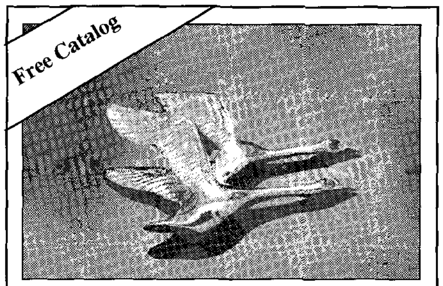

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rected the choir at the mainly white Baptist church every Sunday morning. On Sunday evenings, mother and son would attend the Bethel A.M.E. Church to worship along with Plymouth's other black Christians, of whom there were a handful. In the summer, though, the little Bethel Church was packed as the town overflowed with wealthy white families escaping the sweltering heat of the cities, bringing their black servants. "The lady of the house would give the chauffeur the car for the afternoon, and he would bring the maid, the cook, and the babysitter," Gomes says. "The music on those summer days was incredible, and white people all over the neighborhood would set out their garden chairs and just listen to us sing."

IT is a testament to Gomes's tenacity as an antique collector that his house in Plymouth is as crammed with fine furniture and paintings as Sparks House is. Perched beside Burial Hill, the oldest Pilgrim graveyard in America, the house is a cozy eighteenth-century affair, parts of which have been subtly renovated. An efficiency kitchen flanks one wall of the study; a bookcase stocked with Anglophile porn—videotapes of the complete episodes of "Jeeves and Wooster," "Fawlty Towers," "Upstairs, Downstairs," and "The Pickwick Papers"—stands along another.

When I meet Gomes there, he has just returned from the funeral of a member of one of Plymouth's oldest black families. Trading his gray pin-striped suit jacket for a well-worn, baggy poplin coat, he takes me on a tour of Plymouth, pointing out grand houses where he once worked as a factotum when he was a teen-ager and the historic gravestones in front of which descendants of the Pilgrims have laid colorful wreaths. Gomes is something of a celebrity in Plymouth and is greeted every few blocks by old friends and acquaintances. When we arrive at Plymouth Rock, I am surprised at how small it seems compared with the elaborate mythology it has inspired. Gomes sighs and rolls his eyes. "Alas, that is the *universal* reaction," he says. "I've been bringing people here my entire life, and all they ever say is 'Oh my, is that *it*?' "

On this spot a few years ago, Gomes oversaw a swearing-in ceremony of new citizens to commemorate Plymouth's three-hundred-and-seventy-fifth birthday. Descendants of the hundred and two original Pilgrims, in full Puritan regalia, were to escort a hundred and two new citizens

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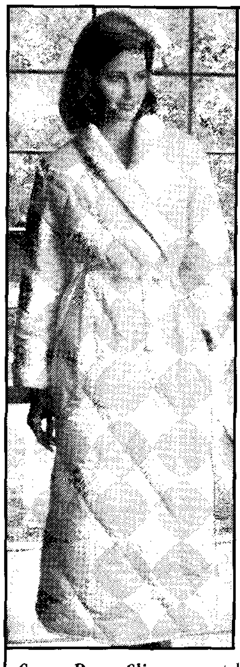

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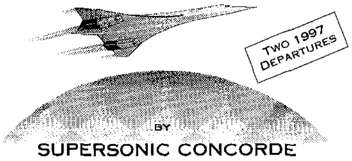

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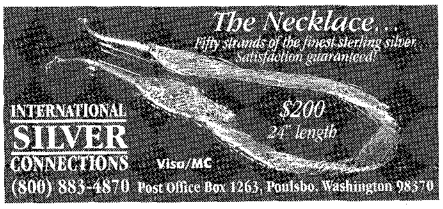

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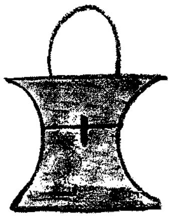
through the event. Supreme Court Justice David Souter ("a Lowell House man," Gomes notes) was to preside, and in the weeks leading up to the occasion Gomes received several stern official notices informing him that, given the secular nature of the proceedings, he was forbidden to invoke the name of the Deity. "I could hardly contain my glee," he says, "when, at the end of the ceremony, each of the new citizens said, '*God* bless America, *God* bless you all, I thank *God* for being here.' "



Today, Plymouth provides Gomes with a respite from the bustle of Harvard Square; but when it came time for college, in 1961, he was eager to get away from the prying eyes of the small town in which he had grown up. He was also unsure whether he wanted to be a preacher, after all. "I just didn't know if I had the call," he says. Although Gomes chose to attend Bates College, a Baptist institution in Maine, he majored in history and fell in love with the more secular dimensions of the life of the mind. "I thought religion was for nice but weak-minded people and believed I had to give it up if I wanted to become a real intellectual," he says. Gomes went so far as to transform the Bates Christian Association into the Bates Campus Association—"I preserved the initials so as not to waste stationery," he explains.

As Gomes entered his senior year, religion was the furthest thing from his mind; he applied to Winterthur's program in connoisseurship and dreamed of becoming the first curator of American decorative arts at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. That fall, he was approached by a Bates professor of religion, who argued that Gomes had never confronted an intellectually challenging form of religion and suggested that he spend a year at Harvard Divinity School, after which he could become a museum curator.

Gomes accepted the suggestion and, in the fall of 1965, enrolled at Harvard, where he eagerly threw himself into its rigorous course of study. The combined presence of seasoned professors and young turks (like Robert Bellah and Harvey Cox) made it a stimulating time to be at the Divinity School, and Gomes thrived. In 1968, having earned good grades and the Harvard preaching prize, Gomes received an offer from the Tuskegee Institute to teach history and direct its freshman-studies program. The quintessential New England Yankee, Gomes had never been to the South—or on a plane—and was excited by the idea of teaching at the historically black school and exploring an entirely new world. "It was my roots thing, before there was a 'Roots,' " he says.

Reports of racial conflict dominated the news in the summer of 1968, and Gomes's mother worried that her irrepressible only son would be lynched; the Baptist church in Plymouth held a special vigil to pray for his safety. As Gomes drove into the Alabama backwoods on his way to Tuskegee, he feared that he had made a grave mistake. It was Labor Day, and although the only students on campus when he arrived were the football players, Gomes says, "I saw more black people in my first half hour at Tuskegee than I had ever seen in my entire life." Gomes was well liked by the students, who called him Pilgrim, and sometimes engaged him in pointless conversations just to hear the exotic sound of his voice. "I was the strangest Negro they had ever seen, because I didn't talk or dress like them," he says. "I was an absolute fashion disaster—it was the late sixties, and I didn't own a single dashiki or pair of sandals."

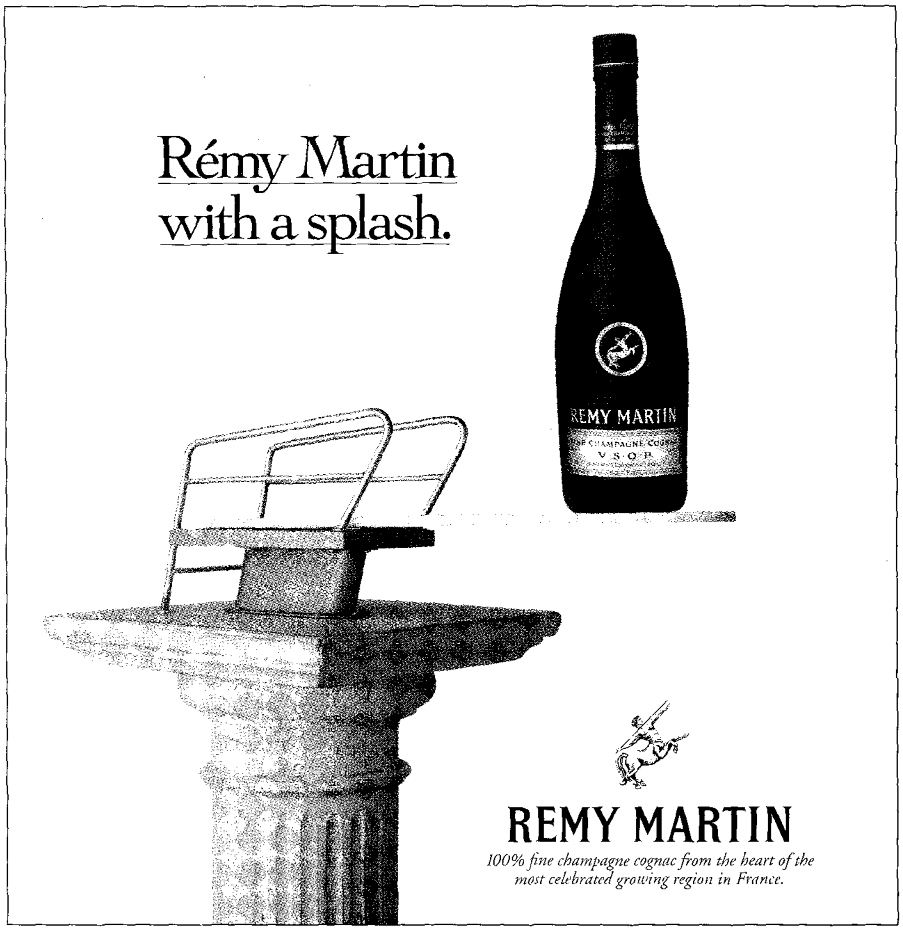
Tuskegee's founder, Booker T. Washington, was still felt as a presence at the school, although he had died some fifty years earlier. Washington's reputation—in contrast to that of the more radical W. E. B. Du Bois—fared badly during the civil-rights years. In an era of growing militancy, Washington was scorned as an accommodationist, and his calls for racial uplift were eclipsed by his acceptance of segregation. Gomes found that he was a fan nevertheless. "Washington was a man after my own heart: ambitious, rigorous, single-minded, demanding, and gifted," he says. "He liked power and knew how to exercise it; he was a pragmatist who built a mighty empire. Nowadays, it is fashionable to say that he wanted to consign our people to manual labor, whereas Du Bois encouraged the Talented Tenth. Well, in 1896 you could call for the Talented Tenth in Boston or Philadelphia, but had you tried that in Tuskegee, Alabama, you'd have been hanged in twenty-four hours."

Gomes was at Tuskegee for two years before being invited back to Harvard, and says that he would have been happy to stay there for the rest of his life. During his Southern sojourn, Harvard had begun the frantic process of refashioning itself to accommodate the social and political upheavals of the student movement. "It was a seismic transformation of the existing order and Harvard fell hard," he says. "The values I had assumed to be eternal were replaced by a kind of angry anxiety. I felt like an Anglo-Indian who had been devoted to the Raj and then returned to India in the mid-nineteen-forties and found the empire about to go under. I felt like Pu Yi returning to China after the revolution: 'I know this world, but does it know me?' "

His progress at Harvard was swift, however: after four years, he held the joint position of minister of Memorial Church and Plummer Professor of Christian Morals. At the age of thirty-two, he was taken aback when his mother told him that he should continue to work his way up the ladder. "What do you mean?" he said. "I'm *starting* at the top!"

FROM his perch as one of the nation's preëminent preachers, Gomes considers the state of public speaking in America to be desperate. "When Peggy Noonan is held up as the Demosthenes of our age and Mario Cuomo is compared with Pericles, merely because he speaks in complete sentences, it shows how thoroughly debased public discourse is," he says. "People like Jesse Jackson's preaching because he is loud, memorable, and passionate—and because they believe they are simply *supposed* to like black preachers, whether they are good or not. Martin Luther King, Al Sharpton, and Jesse Jackson all sound the same to most white Americans, which is a dilemma for me, because I am a black preacher and I don't sound like *any* of them."

Gomes is reluctant to categorize his own style, although he does situate it between two popular genres of preaching. "A lot of black preaching is 'tornado' preaching," he says. "It relies on vivid word-painting, repetition, and rhythmic alliteration—the click-and-clack phrases that sound like jazz." Then there is "clock preaching," which he associates with the best English sermons. "It has the precise, elegant form of a clock," he says. "I love the splendor of the tickery." When he's pushed, he says that he aspires to a playful hybrid of the two: "Think of me as a 'precise tornado.' I like playing with words and structure. Marching up to an idea, saluting, backing off, making a feint, and then turning around. I use the



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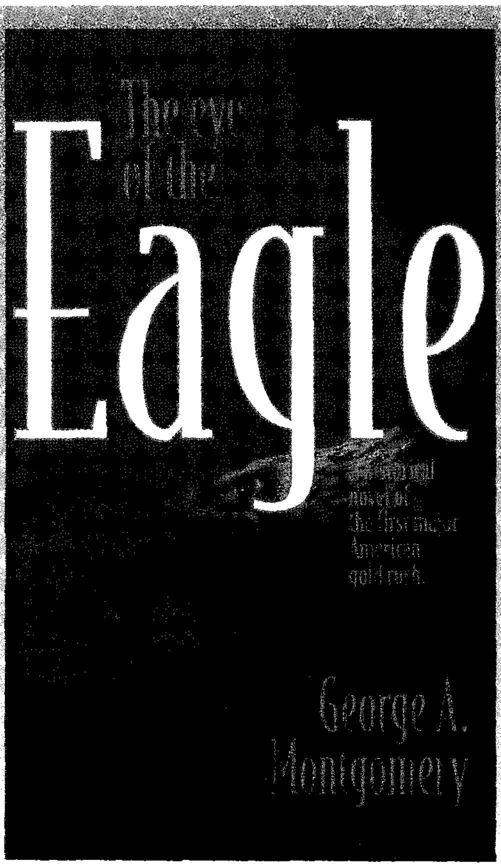

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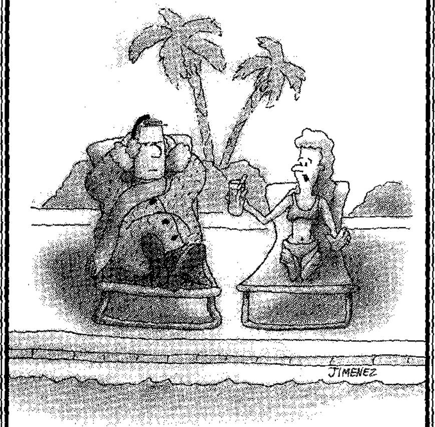

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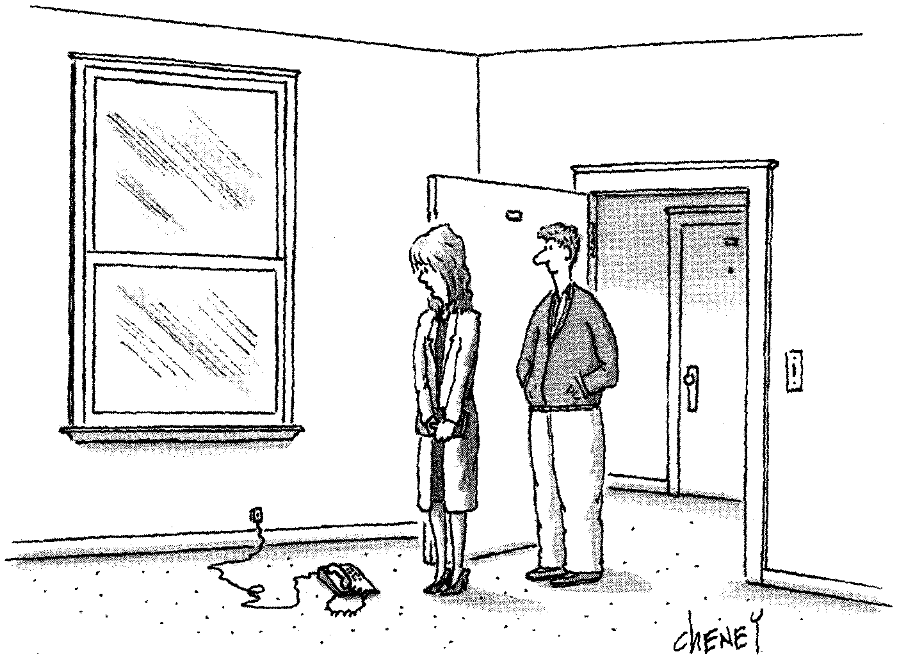


*"Nice phone. Yours?"*

• •

Harvard version of call and response, which is just as effective as all the hooting and hollering of a Baptist church."

Seamus Heaney, the Irish poet and Nobel Laureate, has often listened to Gomes. "He embraces this old-fashioned grandiloquent style in a manner that is always on the edge of carnival," says Heaney, who is currently Harvard's Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory. "His style is full of cadence, roguery, and scampishness, which is itself redemptive. With Gomes there is always an element of masquerade as he tempts his audience into complicity." Of course, it's a technique that has its secular uses as well. Jeff Melvoin, who was the executive producer of the TV series "Picket Fences," describes a Hollywood fund-raiser at which Gomes spoke: "People out here are so rootless and parched, they drank Peter up as if he were an oasis in a desert."

On the morning of the first Wednesday of the term, I sit on a hard wooden pew in the chapel of the Divinity School and listen to Gomes address a group of rapt first-year students. He is at the top of his form, wittily lampooning the students' Ivy League pretensions while simultaneously shoring them up. "There will always be a spectral presence hanging over you here, and it is not the Holy Spirit—it is Harvard," he says. Gomes reminds them that the university was founded by Puritans fleeing England to create a new world order. "They hoped that the world would reform itself in the light of New England: the light of New England was Boston, the heart of Boston was Cambridge, and the center of Cambridge was Harvard," he lectures. "Therefore *Harvard* is the light of the world, and *you* stand in an unbroken apostolic procession stretching all the way back to Moses—who would himself have come to Harvard had he had the chance."

Back in the study of Sparks House, I ask Gomes whether his remarks—all those references to the Puritans' spiritual and political goals—didn't resemble the religious boosterism he rails against in his book. "I don't think so," he says. "I tell them that because nobody else will—nobody else here believes this is a world-historic, religious enterprise, with all the moral baggage which that entails." The greatest poverty of the modern age, he explains, is its lack of high moral ideals against which to measure oneself. Our rights-oriented, secular society feels much more comfortable speaking the language of reform than it does speaking the language of sin and redemption. Gomes believes that the absence of this religious dimension has dramatically diminished our moral imagination and resulted in what he calls "the secularization of virtue." We have obscured the fundamental difference between spiritually inspired righteous protest and mere special-interest lobbying.

Gomes sees this confusion among many

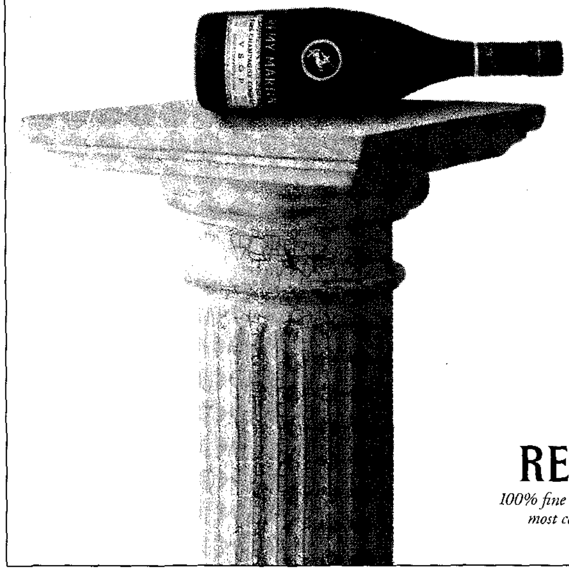
of the groups that perceive themselves as the rightful heirs of the civil-rights movement. "What so many people fail to understand is that the civil-rights movement was not political or social but, fundamentally, religious and moral," he says. "It was animated by a Christian perception of the Biblical notions of sin and redemption. The secular social movements that are today trying to siphon off the civil-rights movement's moral reservoir simply don't run on that fuel." The recent event that Gomes believes has come closest to capturing the spiritual energy of the civil-rights movement is the Million Man March. "Whatever else one says about Louis Farrakhan, the march was an appeal to the conscience of those who are most easily driven to the margins of society," he says. "The key to its success was the way it embraced sin, atonement, and redemption, which are not notions I have ever seen the gay, women's, or antiwar movements embrace."

Gomes has strong feelings about the role of religion in politics, and the importance of maintaining a community that stands apart from the secular culture, not as its reflection but as its guide. Since we live in such a thoroughly rational, utilitarian world, Gomes believes, the church must play a role akin to that of St. Augustine's City of God: a reminder that we live in two cities simultaneously—one that is eternal and divine, and one in which we merely have to get along.

"It is not all that different from my model for the university," he says. "Harvard is my City of God. We are different from the rest of the world, and we ought to be." I ask Gomes about his own role in this "city," and he responds by quoting a line from Willa Cather's "My Ántonia": "That is happiness; to be dissolved into something complete and great." And this, of course, is the great irony of Gomes's status as an institutional pillar: that he is at once perfectly marginal and perfectly central—a totem, willy-nilly, both of exclusion and of exclusivity.

"I've given my life to Harvard, and I have a wonderful sense of the great continuity," he declares. "I can *see* the Puritans sailing in, I can *see* Henry Dunster's first commencement, and the incredible thing is that *I can see me in it!* People sometimes say, 'Well, in those days *you* wouldn't have been there.' Please, you don't have to tell *me* that. The glory of Harvard is that although I might not have had a share in its past, that past now belongs to me! Now, *that* is an extraordinary transaction." ♦

Of course, some still prefer it straight up.



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## PERSONAL HISTORY

# HYENA

*The author wanted only to work with animals, even if it meant risking death.*

BY JOANNA GREENFIELD

I SAW a giraffe with three tick birds perched in its mane. Every time I tried to take a picture, one of them flirted its tail to the other side, so they were never all three facing in the same direction, as if such order were to them distasteful. I submitted and lowered the camera. They switched about like a chorus line and regarded me with heads cocked this way and that.

The giraffe raised its head as if it were on a string and chomped thoughtfully in my direction. I had sworn to take no more giraffe pictures with my limited film. Film was hard to get in Kenya, and, in the first two months of a semester in wildlife management, I'd taken five rolls just of giraffes feeding. But I couldn't resist photographing the tick birds. They hopped through the mane like crickets in grass. I don't know if they knew that their tree was alive and moving, but the giraffe seemed to lower its head with extra care, for the visitors.

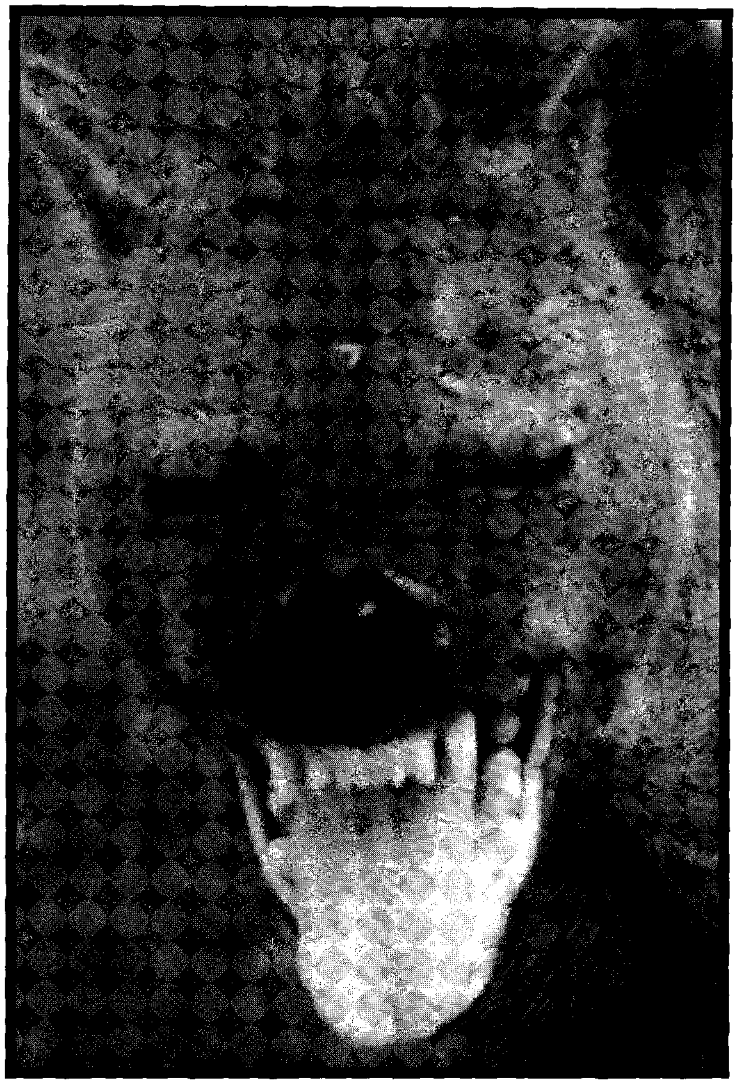
I saw two lion cubs abandoned in a tree, one on top of the other. The larger one, with wisps of mane already starting under his ears, draped his shoulder over the other cub, and they peered out with heads together, massive paws flopped over the crotch of the tree. Pale but complacent, they blinked their gold eyes in dapples of sunlight through the leaves. Perhaps the pride had gone to hunt, leaving their treasure, like pirates, in an old tree. As our van drove nearer, the heads stretched out straight over the monster paws and the cubs tensed together. Then we were past, and I looked back to see them relaxed again, all ears.

The van slowed, then stopped, for a hyena in the road. It was a spotted hyena, the kind people think of when they hear the word "hyena"—a dirty, matted creature, dripping with blood. It must have made a good kill. The prey must have been large enough for the hyena to thrust its whole head in, up to the blocklike shoulders.

This must be why the hyena has such a snake of a neck—so it can delve deep into a dying animal and eat the best parts before thieves chase it away. Hyenas always go first for the softest parts, like entrails, although they have jaws stronger than a lion's, and can eat bones.

This hyena's belly bulged over its legs, and it sat in the road, as if musing, making no attempt to clean off the blood. The slurs that human beings cast at the species fall as useless as gossip about Greek gods. The hyena sat there despite all our encouragement to it to move, and, long past the point when a lion would have slunk peevishly away, we had to slither over a ditch to pass by.

As we drove away, I saw other hyenas stretched flat on the savanna. They were all dipped in blood, but every stain was different. One could see which animal had gnawed at a leg, cheek pressed to bloody flank, or which had held a piece to its chest and embraced it there as it chewed. The prey animal, a wildebeest or a zebra, like one of the human shadows of Hiroshima, was left only in negative, fragmented about the savanna in ghostly prints of blood.



*There was no pain—just the feeling that he and I were playing tug-of-war with my body.*

ANIMALS, ANIMALS/DR. E.R. DEGGINGER

The deathbed was almost clean. A crowd of vultures pounced on and squabbled over pieces of skin ripped free when the hyenas pulled off their parts, and a few insects had already stripped clots of blood from the soaked grass. Nothing else was left.

SPOTTED hyenas are the sharks of the savanna, superpredators and astounding recyclers of garbage. They hunt in large, giggling groups, running alongside their prey and eating chunks of its flesh until it slows down through loss of blood, or shock, or sheer hopelessness, and then the hyenas grab for the stomach and pull the animal to a halt with its own entrails or let it stumble into the loops and whorls of its own body. They eat the prey whole and cough back, like owls, the indigestible parts, such as hair and hooves.

Hyenas in the wild can roam dozens of miles a day. They leave their young in small dens and trot or lope across the savanna, head down or held high and rear tucked under, until they've found a hare or a pregnant gazelle or a nicely rotted piece of flesh. But when the herds begin to migrate the hyenas leave their dens to follow them, and, passing over hills, through rifts and acacia stands, and along dry riverbeds, they reach the open plains of the Serengeti, where wildebeest beyond count mill and groan in clouds of dust.

I once saw a family of hyenas playing on an elephant skull. They rolled on their backs, biting gently at each other's legs. Two cubs squeezed under and then out of the elephant's mandible. A female turned on her side, paws in the air, and broke off a piece of the skull as if eating a biscuit in bed. Hyenas almost never kill humans—only now and then taking a piece from the cheek of a sleeping man, and that probably because some villagers used to put out their dead for hyenas, flies, and any vultures in the area. As the man jumps up—perhaps he is a messenger between villages or someone searching for a bride—the hyena instantly, peaceably, retreats.

AFRICA is like no other place on earth, and there is no better place to watch animals. They roam sun-dazed on the savanna by the million, sniffing up the scent of dried grass, swishing their tails, eyes often half closed. Sometimes they ignore human beings, sometimes they stare, but always there is something to look at: impalas dancing together in a mock fight, giraffes slow-swinging across the horizon. In the distance, vervet monkeys hop through branches. An ostrich runs with tail rampant, all the while flapping its wings in agitation, like a maiden aunt caught in a shower. A baboon nurses its toe. A lion quietly chuffs to itself.

I had wanted to go to Africa since my childhood, in Connecticut. Before I was born, my eyes lost their attachment to each other, the instinctive knowledge of how to swivel together, how to analyze data in tandem. The vision of one eye is only slightly cloudy, but it withdraws from coöperation with the other. My eyes do not work like two halves of a whole, and I have no perception of depth, so human faces blend into their background and are unreadable. The unreadable is frightening. When I was a child, friendly voices could dig deep and sharp without warning: without depth perception, there is no warning. I had to learn about emotions, which are subtle and often masked, from animals, who signal theirs so much more clearly, with mane and tail and the position of the body. Human beings were a hazard.

There was only one thing that my eyes took in with ease. As the school bus crossed the marshes on a small cement bridge, we could see down the river to the horizon, and up the river toward a bend of trees. In the swamp that ran alongside it grew cattails and rushes, as naturally gold as they were tall. They were semi-translucent. Each blade glowed separately in the morning sun as if lit within. Together in their bending, high-feathered swamp, they bowed under the weightlessness of light. Sometimes there was mist rising from the water, and altogether it was the only masterpiece I ever saw in my suburban town. I don't know why I needed to see those rushes so badly, or how I knew Africa would be the same, but it was.

I HAD never wanted to work anywhere except in Africa, but after I graduated from college a wildlife-reserve director from Israel told me that he needed someone to set up a breeding site for endangered animals and I decided to go. When I got there, I was told that the project had been postponed and was asked if I'd mind taking a job as a volunteer at another reserve, cleaning enclosures. The reserve was dedicated to Biblical animals, many of them predators from the Israeli wild—hyenas, wolves, foxes, and one unmated leopard—attackers of kibbutz livestock. It was something to do, with animals, so I trudged off every day in the hundred-and-fourteen-degree heat with half a sandwich and a water canteen. I was being groomed for the job I'd initially been offered, but for the moment I sifted maggots for the lizards and snakes, and cleaned the fox, cat, hyena, wolf, and leopard corrals.

As the days got hotter, my fellow-workers and I carried gallon jugs of water in our wheelbarrows, poured it over our heads, and drank the rest until our stomachs were too full for food. It became a steady rhythm: sift dung, pour, drink, sift. We worked in pairs among the larger animals for safety, but toward the end of the month I was allowed to feed a young hyena and clean his cage. Efa had been taken from his parents as a cub because his mother rejected him. Also, he was a cross between a North African and an Israeli striped hyena, and nobody wanted him to confuse the gene pool further by mating. He was a beautiful animal. A mane trickled down sloped shoulders like a froth of leftover baby hair; he looked strangely helpless, as if weighed down by the tangled strands, and his back rounded to a dispirited slump. Even though he had a hyena's posture, he was like a German shepherd, a little dirty, but graceful, and so strong he didn't seem to have any muscles. His stripes twisted a bit at the ends and shimmered over the coat like feathers at rest. With his bat face and massed shoulders, he would have been at home in the sky, poised in a great leap, or swooping for prey. But here he was given aged meat, and he often left even that to rot before he ate it.

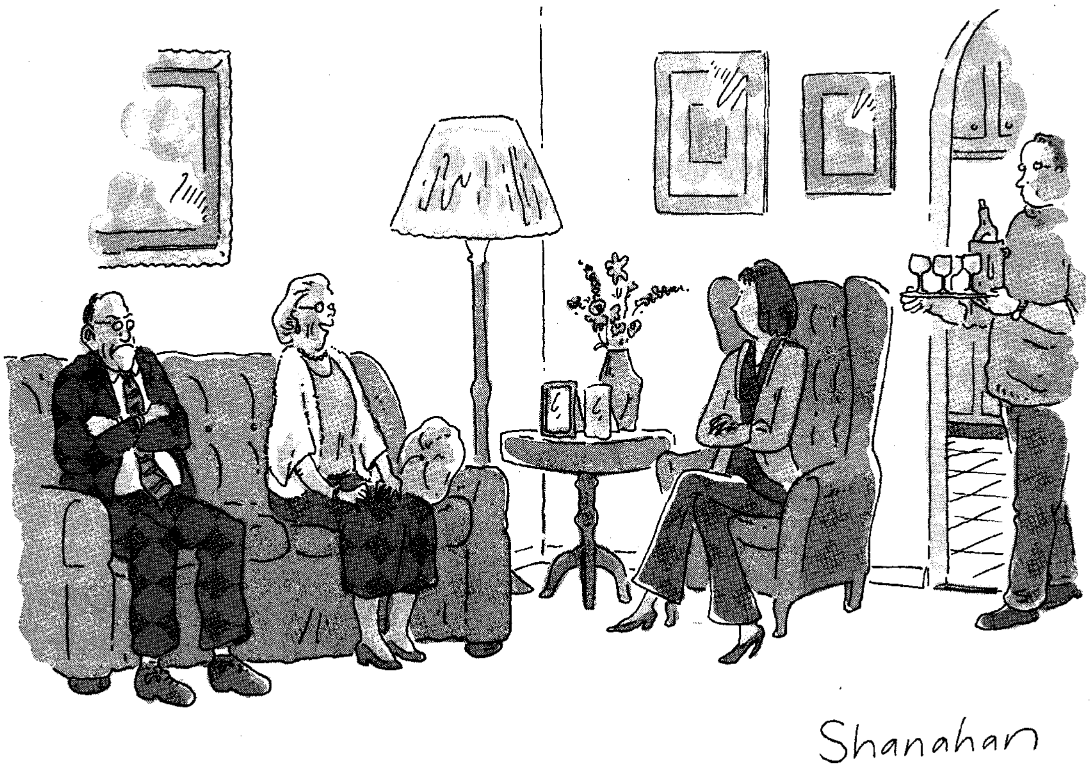
He had been, they said, an adorable cub, crying "*Maaaaaa!*" to Shlomi, the gentlest of the workers and the one who reared him, and he followed Shlomi everywhere. Then he grew too big to run loose, and he started biting at people, so they put him in a corral—a square of desert surrounded by an electrified fence with a large water basin perched in the center.

Efa was bored and lonely. He flipped the basin over every day, attacking it as if it were prey. When we fed him in the morning, there was nowhere to put his water. He knocked over everything, so we had no choice: we had to put him in a holding cage outside his corral while we built a concrete pool that he couldn't move. This was worse. Locked in a cage, he rebelled. He refused to eat, and every box we gave him for shade was torn to pieces. After a few days, I walked by and saw him standing defiant in the cage, his shade box in splinters and his water overturned again. "*Maaaaaaaa! Mmaaaaa!*" he croaked at me. I made a note to return and water him when I'd finished with the others.

I stopped to talk to the leopard, who was in heat. This was my first chance to get near her; when she was not hormonally sedated, she lunged at passersby, swatting her claws through the chicken wire.

"You're so beautiful."

She purred, and rubbed against the mesh. The men said you could stroke her like a house cat when she was in these moods. I wanted to touch her, a leopard from the oases of Israel's last deserts, but



"Even after all these years, I still find it very exciting using my vote to cancel out your father's."

• •

I stayed away, in case she changed her mind, and squatted out of reach to talk to her. I didn't want to force her to defend herself.

It might have been the attention I gave the leopard, but Efa was in a frenzy of "*Mmmaaaaaaad*"s when I returned to his cage. He crouched like a baby, begging for something. I filled a water tray and unlatched the door that opened into a corridor running between the cage and the corral, then I closed it. If only I'd just squirted the hose into the cage, but instead I unlatched the cage door and bent over to put the dish down, talking to him. The mind, I found, is strange. It shut off during the attack, while my body continued to act, without thought or even sight. I don't remember him sinking his teeth into my arm, though I heard a little grating noise as his teeth chewed into the bone.

Everything was black and slow and exploding in my stomach. Vision returned gradually, like an ancient black-and-white television pulling dots and flashes to the center for a picture. I saw at a remove the hyena inside my right arm, and my other arm banging him on the head. My body, in the absence of a mind, had decided that this was the best thing to do. And scream. Scream in a thin angry hysteria that didn't sound like me. Where was everyone? My mind was so calm and remote that I frightened myself, but my stomach twisted. I hit harder, remembering the others he'd nipped. He'd always let go.

Efa blinked and surged back, jerking me forward. I stumbled out of my sandals into the sand, thinking, with fresh anxiety, I'll burn my feet. I tried to kick him between the legs, but it was awkward, and he was pulling me down by the arm, down and back into the cage. When I came back from Africa the first time, I took a class in self-defense so I'd feel safer with all the soldiers, guerrilla warriors, and policemen when I returned. I remembered the move I'd vowed to use on any attacker: a stab and grab at the jugular, to snap it inside the skin. But the hyena has callused skin on its throat, thick and rough, like eczema. I lost hope and felt the slowness of this death to be the worst insult. Hyenas don't kill fast, and I could end up in the sand watching my entrails get pulled through a cut in my stomach and eaten like spaghetti, with tugs and jerks. I started to get mad, an unfamiliar feeling creeping in to add an acid burn to the chill of my stomach. Another removal from myself. I never let myself get mad. I want peace. I tried to pinch his nostrils so he'd let go of my arm to breathe, but he shook his head, pulling me deeper into the cage.

I think it was then that he took out the first piece from my arm and swallowed it without breathing, because a terror of movement settled in me at that moment and lasted for months. He moved up the arm, and all the time those black, blank eyes evaluated me, like a shark's, calm and almost friendly. By this time, my right arm was a mangled mess of flesh, pushed-out globs of fat, and flashes of bone two inches long, but my slow TV mind, watching, saw it as whole, just trapped in the hyena's mouth, in a tug-of-war like the one I used to play with my dogs—only it was my arm now instead of a sock. It didn't hurt. It never did.

The hyena looked up at me with those indescribable eyes and surged back again, nearly pulling me onto his face. I remembered self-defense class and the first lesson: "Poke the cockroach in the eyes." All the women had squealed, except me. "Ooooh, I could *never* do that." Ha, I'd thought. Anyone who wants to kill me has no right to live. I'd poke him in the eyes.

I LOOKED at those eyes with my fingers poised to jab. It was for my family and my friends that I stuck my fingers in his eyes. I just wanted to stop watching myself get eaten, either be dead and at peace or be gone, but other lives were connected to mine. I'm not sure if I did more than touch them gently before he let go and whipped past me to cower against the door to the outside, the Negev desert.

Events like this teach you yourself. We all think we know what we would do, hero or coward, strong or weak. I expected strength, and the memory of my tin-whistle scream curdles my blood, but I am proud of the stupid thing I did next. He cowered and whimpered and essentially apologized, still with those blank unmoving eyes, and I stood still for a second. My arm felt light and shrunken, as if half of it were gone, but I didn't look. From the corridor, I had a choice of two doors: the one through which I'd entered, leading back to the desert, and the one opening onto the corral. I didn't think I could bend over him and unlatch the door to the desert. He'd just reach up and clamp onto my stomach. And I didn't want to open the door to the corral, or he'd drag me in and be able to attack the men if they ever came to help me. My body, still in control, made the good hand grab the bad elbow, and I beat him with my own arm, as if I had ripped it free to use as a club. "No!" I shouted. "No, no!" *Lo lo lo*, in Hebrew. I might even have said "Bad boy," but I hope not. It was the beating that damaged my hand permanently. I must have hit him hard enough to crush a ligament, because there is a lump on my hand to this day, five years later, but he didn't even blink. He came around behind me and grabbed my right leg, and again there was no pain—just the feeling that he and I were playing tug-of-war with my body—but I was afraid to pull too hard on the leg. He pulled the leg up, stretching me out in a line from the door, where I clung with the good hand to the mesh, like a dancer at the barre. It felt almost good, as if the whole thing were nearer to being over. In three moves I didn't feel, he took out most of the calf.

I opened the door to the desert and he ran out, with a quick shove that staggered me. I couldn't move the right leg, just crutched myself along on it into the Negev. He waited for me. The cold in my stomach was stabbing my breath away. The hyena and I were bonded now. Even if someone did come to help, there was still something left to finish between us. I was marked—his. I saw, in color, that he was going to knock me over, and I thought, in black-and-white, No, don't, you'll hurt my leg, I should keep it still.

A workman stood by a shed uphill, leaning on a tool in the sand. He watched me walk toward the office, with the hyena ahead and looking back at me. He was the only spectator I noticed, though I was told later, in the hospital, that some tourists, there to see the animals, were screaming for help, and three—or was it five?—soldiers had had their machine guns aimed at us throughout the whole thing. Israeli soldiers carry their arms everywhere when they're in uniform; but they must have been afraid to shoot. I don't know. Stories get told afterward. I didn't see anyone except the workman, looking on impassively, and the leopard, pacing inside her fence, roaring a little, with the peace of her heat gone as suddenly as it had appeared.

As I walked, the black-and-white faded, and color washed back in. I saw the blood for the first time. It was in my hair, had soaked into my clothes all the way to the skin, and was drying in a trickle from arm and legs. Each step left a cold puddle of blood around the right foot. I held up the arm and fumbled for the pressure point. The hyena trotted ahead of me as if he were afraid to be alone in the desert but was all right with me. Every now and then, he looked back, as if thinking about finishing me off—once again a predator, calm and competent, silver, and splashed with blood. But then men ran up shouting, and I stopped, and snapped, sorry even then for sounding like a bitch, "Get Efa and bring around the van."

Shlomi ran up and grabbed my good left arm, hustling me forward. Not so fast, I wanted to say, but I didn't. Every step felt more wrong, and I dragged back against moving until he almost shoved me forward.

In the van, blood sloshed around my feet and I tried to find the pressure point of the groin but gave up. I held up the arm instead, and pretended I knew what I was doing. Shlomi stopped to open the reserve gate, and then again to close it. As he got back in, I lost feeling in my right leg.

We drove for what seemed like a long time, then turned into a kibbutz and roared past lines of women planting pineapples, past a cement yard, and then he was running me into a clinic past gasping women. And I wanted to apologize. I never cut in line. Shlomi pulled me forward while I stiffened up. Damn it, I want to be carried, I've done enough by myself, I remember thinking. But I made it to the examining table and Shlomi yelled for a doctor in Hebrew. A woman came in and told him there was no doctor—only nurses. They stopped telling me what was happening. Hands shaking, she yanked me forward and stuck my arm under a faucet. Hey. She turned on the water and it fell onto the bone and a minor nerve, full force. That was a sensation I wish I couldn't remember. No pain, but a tremendous feeling of wrongness. My insides were out.

She tried to get my leg into the sink, pulling at the ankle, and the shrivelled arm twitched in the air for balance. I tensed, so she couldn't; I wished later

Stuart Leeds

*"My career goal is not to fall off the goddam tree."*

that I'd let her, because it was weeks before the dried blood and dirt peeled off. She told me to get on a stretcher, and then she poured hydrogen peroxide into the trenches in my leg. It foamed with a roar that spat froth in the air. That felt wrong, too. Shlomi grabbed the sink for support. I told him it didn't hurt. He wasn't listening. I was starting to feel better. Someone was making the decisions.

"Don't worry, Shlomi. I never wanted to dance ballet."

"No, I don't know, the leg is very bad."

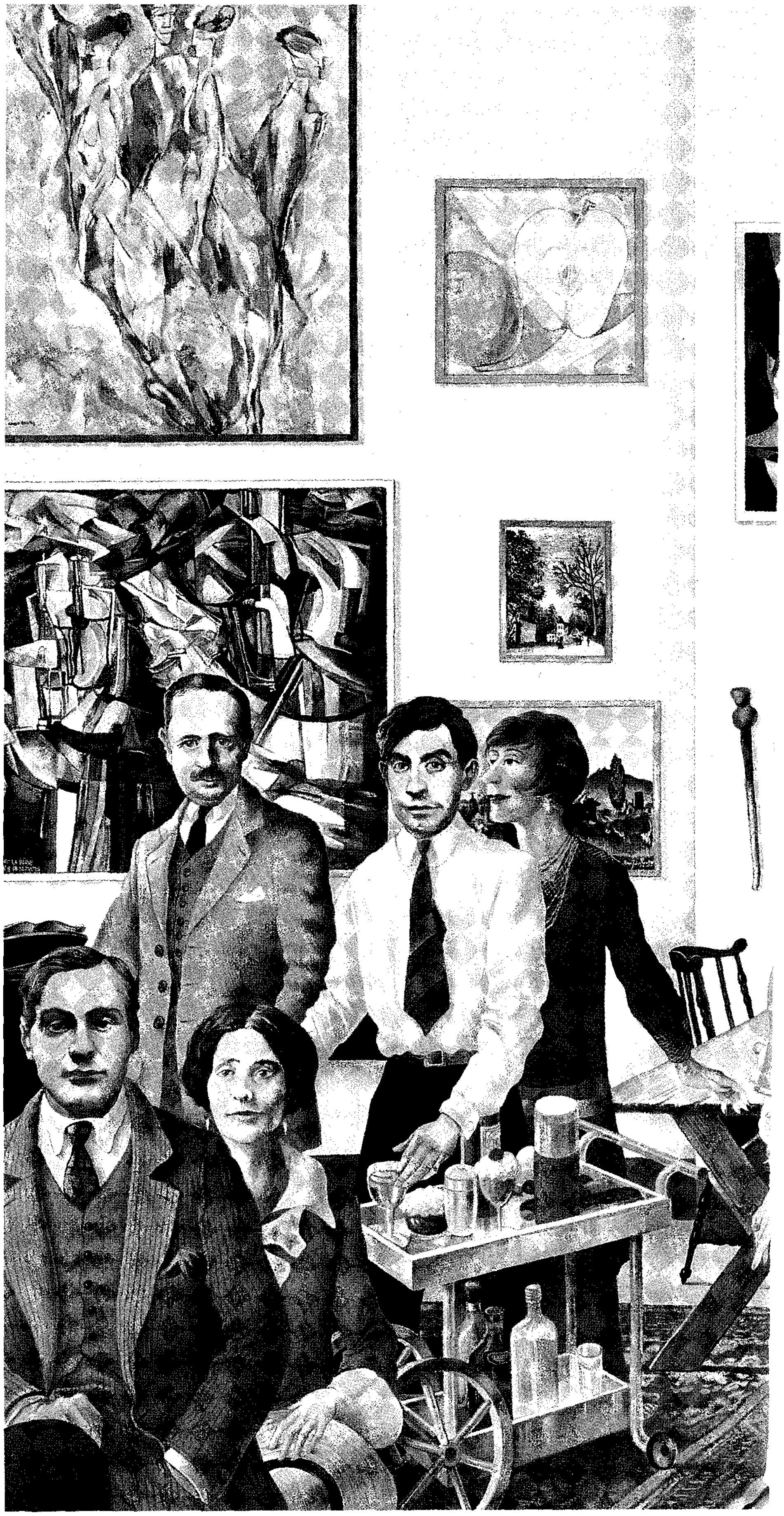
Like all Israelis, he could make a statement of fact sound like an accusation. I knew it was bad, I just didn't see the need to dwell on it when I was so very surprised to be alive. The nurse picked up a towel and started wiping off the blood and dirt with brisk, scratchy strokes, and I cramped in the stomach again, worrying about infection. And what were we waiting for? We waited awhile, and then she gave me anti-shock injections.

"I'm not in shock," I said, and meant it. I thought I was thinking more clearly than she was. Shlomi told me that we were waiting for an ambulance. He was gray, with sick, inturned eyes, the way I must have looked while the attack was happening. But I was over it, and he was just beginning. He and the nurse did not share my pleasure. In fact, they seemed taken aback at my jokes, so I stopped talking.

I HAD a new terror, but it was peaceful compared with the other, so I lay back. Fly home, microsurgery, I can spare the leg if something has to go, but I have to have the hand for graduate school. Helicopters, international flights, nerve damage.

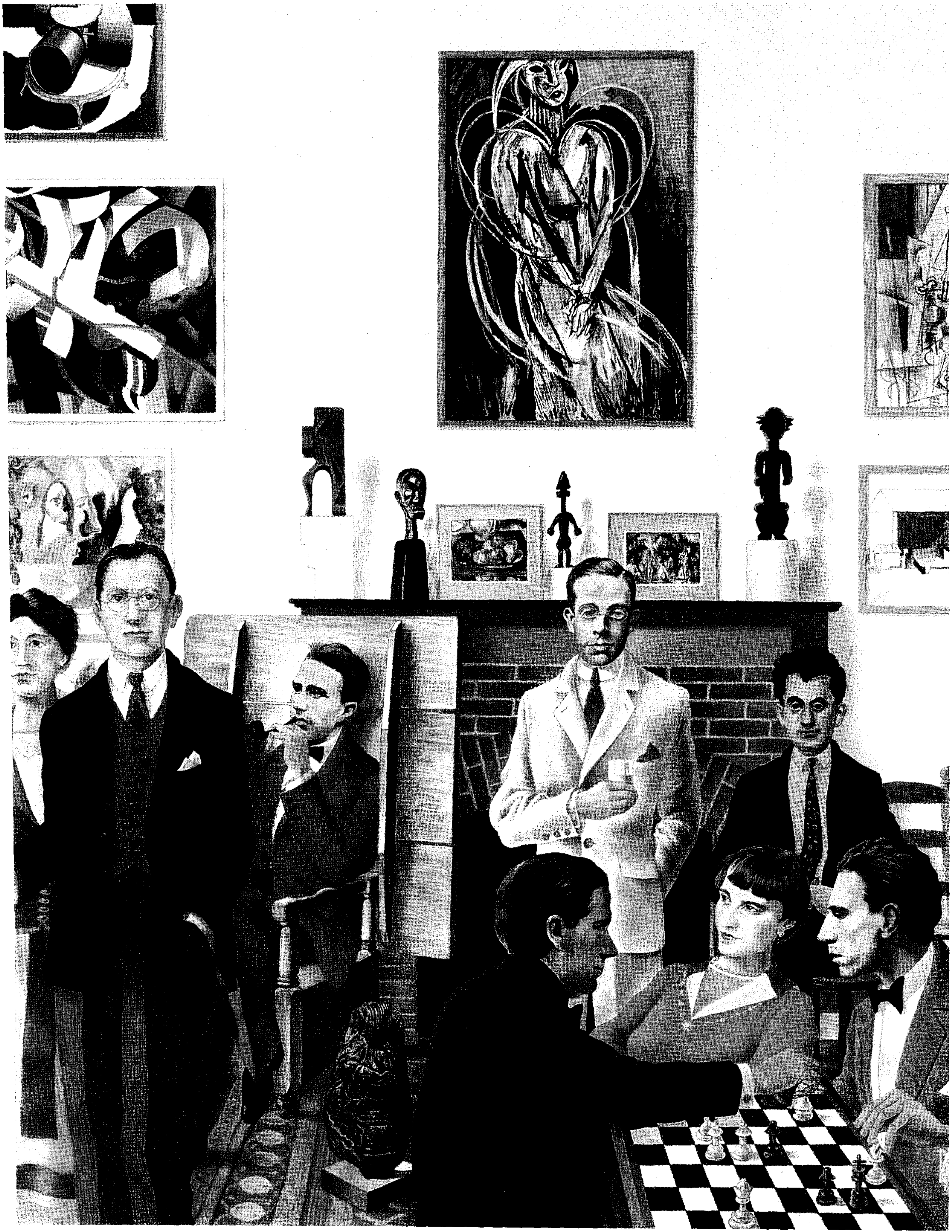
The ambulance came. The nurse and Shlomi looked as bloodless as I felt. They pushed me around, telling me to get onto the gurney, and I tried to make them let go so I could just roll onto it instead of jumping down from the table. They did, and wheeled me out in state through a crowd of horrified kibbutzniks. They showed no excitement over it; pain is too real to Israelis.

I AM sure Efa crawled out to greet me with no intention to kill. He had cried to me like an infant in distress, hunched over and rounded. His ruff lay flat and soft and his tail hung



CABARET ARENSBERG *"Making Mischief: Dada Invades New York" opens at t apartment of the collectors Walter and Louise Arensberg. Francis M. Naumann, the sho them), Francis Picabia and Henri-Pierre Roché (playing chess), Man Ray (dark jack*

ANDRÉ RAFFRAY COURTESY OF FRANCIS M. NAUMANN



*hitney on November 21st. Mission control for New York Dada, which flourished from 1915 to 1923, was the West Sixty-seventh Street ator, commissioned this panorama of the Arensberg salon, which shows the Arensbergs (center), Marcel Duchamp (seated behind atching the game), and other artists and writers who made the movement jump.*

down. He attacked me, I think, in a moment of thirst-induced delirium and loneliness. If he had wanted to eat or to attack, he could have taken my arm in a snap: one sharp jab and jerk, and the wrist would have been gone before I even noticed. If he had wanted to kill me, he could have leaped for my stomach as soon as he had pulled me down by the arm.

Cheetahs often catch hold of their prey's nose and run alongside it. As the victim stumbles and falls, or staggers, or tries to run, the cheetah holds tight, closing mouth and nostrils in one stapled hold, or—with larger prey—biting into the throat to cut off air. Leopards like to leap down from trees for a quick crack of the back. Lions improvise. Each has its own specialty. Some leap up from behind, like a terrestrial leopard; some try a daring front leap, risking hooves and horns to bite into neck or face.

Hyenas are far more efficient. They catch hold of flesh, not with small nips and throwing of weight but by smoothly and quickly transferring chunks of it from prey to throat. Food slips instantly from toothhold to stomach. Like human infants nursing, they seem to swallow without pausing for breath, as if food and air travelled in separate channels. They are the only predators adapted to eating bone. Their dung is white with it.

I heard a story of a young boy in Nairobi who was watching over a herd of goats and fell asleep leaning on his stick. A hyena appeared and opened the boy's stomach with one quick rip. For the hyena it might have been play, this trying on of assault. But he won, as he was bound to do. I was told that someone took the boy to a doctor and he died a while later. He could have lived; we don't need all our intestines, and the hyena had probably left enough behind. But maybe they didn't have the right antibiotics or sterile dressings. I would have liked to ask him what he saw in the hyena's eyes.

IN the ambulance, the driver chatted for a bit, then said, "Don't close your eyes. If you feel faint, tell me and I'll stop right away."

To do what, watch me? I didn't tell him that I'd been exhausted for months—I'd got parasites in Africa—and always shut my eyes when I had the chance. I closed them now, and he asked me questions with an anxiety that warmed my heart. I love to be taken care of. It was good to be strapped down and bandaged, all decisions out of my hands after the hard ones, the life-and-death ones. It was also, I learned, a good thing to have the wounds hidden. Once they were open to the air, my stomach clenched with pain that made life temporarily not worth living. The arm, I finally noticed, was curled up on itself, like paper shrivelling inward in a fire, but heavy instead of too light.

We arrived at the hospital with a screech and a yank and a curse. The doors were stuck, but the driver pushed, and ran me in. Then he left with a wave of farewell. I waited and waited. A doctor came in and plowed my arm in search of a vein with blood, going deep under the muscle, to attach a saline drip. My nails were white, like things soaked in formaldehyde, and I was freezing. Bled white, I was. Nothing left to fill a test tube.

I asked the doctor to talk with the reserve's veterinarian before he did anything. Hyena bites are violently infectious. The animals' mouths are full of bacteria from rotten meat. He shrugged. But when Shlomi told him to wait for the vet he did. The vet told him to clean the holes out and leave them open for now, because the infection could kill me.

"The infection will probably take the leg anyway," the doctor told me. "The chances are fifty-fifty that we'll have to amputate."

I looked down once at the leg before they began cutting out the dirtier shreds of flesh and paring the whole surface of the wound. The holes were impossibly wide, more than twice the size of the hyena's face. I know now that skin and muscle are stretched over bone like canvas over a canoe. One thinks of skin as irrevocably bonded to flesh, and all as one entity. But skin is attached to flesh only with the lightest of bonds, and, once it has been ripped, the body gives way naturally, pulling the flesh back to its scaffolding of bone. The invisible woman, I thought, as the chill took me; I can see right through my leg.

I couldn't see all of it because of my bad eyesight, and the leg was still covered with blood-stuck sand, but it was strange the way the leg went down normally, then cut in to the bone, along the bone, and then out again to a normal ankle, except for a small gash on the side with fat poking out. I couldn't yet see the other hole. It was lower down, starting halfway past the one I could see, and continuing around the back of the leg to the other side, so almost the whole leg was girdled around. I still don't know how blood got to that stranded wall of flesh.

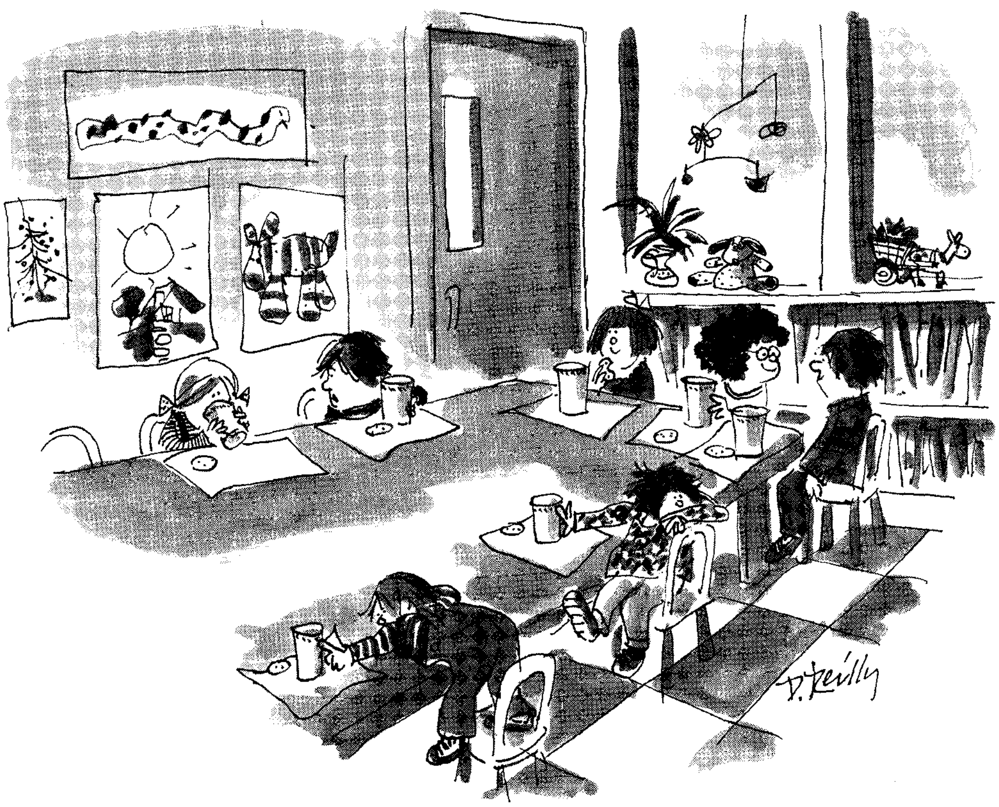
The doctor worked on the leg for an hour, clipping pieces of flesh out of the wounds with little scissor snips, as if my leg were a piece of cloth that he was carefully tailoring with dull tools. I asked for a larger dose of anesthetic, not because I felt any pain—I never felt any, really—but because I could feel the scissors scissoring away the flesh and I couldn't breathe. Between bouts of cutting, I kept joking, happy it was over, or might be over, and people crowded into the room to watch. No sterilization? Who cares? I was alive. They pumped saline into me so fast that my arm swelled and I had to go to the bathroom. For the first time, I realized how my life had changed. There is, after all, no simple dichotomy: intact and alive versus torn and dead.

They sent some of the people out and stuck a bedpan under the sheet. With one wrist locked to the I.V. and the other paralyzed, I couldn't wipe. Warrior to newborn babe in an hour. Someone brought me my sandals. They were dirty and covered with dried blood, like small dead animals.

I HAD expected the hyena bite in Africa, not in Israel. I had expected the price I paid for Africa to be high. The need that had driven me since I was eight years old had made me willing to risk anything, even death, to be in Africa watching animals. Anyone who works with animals expects to get hurt. You are a guest in their life—any intrusion is a threat to them. It is their separateness that makes them worthy of respect.

After the hospital, I went back to America for physical therapy and treatment of the parasites, which burned a path in my stomach for the next six months. Before I left, people from the reserve asked me to stand near Efa's cage. They wanted to know if his animosity was specific to me. He looked at me, again with those friendly blank eyes, and then rose up against the wire with a crash so loud that I thought he was breaking through. For one second, I saw his face coming toward me, mouth open, and I hopped back. They told me they were going to send him to a zoo where the keepers wouldn't have to go into the cage, but I heard later that a veterinarian came and put Efa to sleep. ("Forever asleep," the workers said.) Shlomi was there.

Back in America, too ill for school, I read about animals on my own. Then I went to graduate school, but I found the statistical and analytical approach to animals too reductive. So I gave it up. But I couldn't not return to Africa. Five years after the hyena bite, I went back. Without a job, or any scientific purpose, I backpacked between Tanzania and Kenya, seeing the savanna in short bursts of safaris and hired cars and *matatu* buses.



*"So what's your custody deal?"*

• •

AFRICA smells of nothing but dust, and that dust lingers with sweetness in the nose and like powder on the skin. It comes from everywhere, even the greenest grass, and it fingers into clothing like minuscule parasites. Shirts blossom red or brown, sometimes yellow, with dust; when clapped they puff into a cloud of color, like a dandelion blown adrift. With the wind in my face and the dust drifting over me, I have never felt so clean.

In spite of its color, the dust is translucent. African sunsets are famous. People say the dust rises into the atmosphere and reflects the sun's light. I think the particles rise, with their own separate colors, and the sun shines through them, heat through translucent splendor.

I believe that, even if you pass through quickly, there are landscapes that are particularly yours. Thousands of explorers returned home with shards of Africa embedded in their lungs. Breathe deeply enough, and you become part of that world, filled to the brim and clogged with its clays and dust.

In the Kenyan highlands, the nights are always cool, and there are so many stars that a book can be read by their light if there's no moon. Eyes sparkle in the light. At night, they reflect it back in small round circles. Snakes are tiny pinpricks in the grass, hares in a field sparkle like fireflies as they turn their heads to look at the car. Mice eyes are like snakes', but closer together. As we drive by, antelope flash one eye and then the other at us, white orbs of light in gray shadows. If you sit in the open mouth of your tent before the fire, the eyes of the hyenas shine green and gold, low down to the ground, and they look at you. People in Africa usually put their garbage pits too close to their camps, so we ate our dinner next to baboons screaming over a cabbage leaf, or hyenas snarling over bones. I hadn't told anyone here about the hyena bite. I liked to watch the hyenas rushing in and out of the pit, squabbling and rolling over each other, but still very friendly, trotting away flank to flank and stopping to look at me. An animal trainer told me that once you've been bitten badly enough to limp, even if the limp is almost imperceptible the animals will know, and from then on you are prey, not master.

Driving away from my tent camp in Africa, I came upon a den of hyenas. The first one stood like a statue on the great pan of rock, the kind I loved to play on as a child, full of towers and caves and little ledges, with the rock smooth underfoot. It was a silvery animal, very serious, like a young sentinel, and it wasn't until we saw the mother that we realized it was a hyena. Three generations lived in the den. Babies rolled in balls under the mother's feet and she pricked her ears at us and stepped clear, to watch with the sentinel. Water pooled in a curve before her, rocking with flashes of light in the wind, decadent somehow against the dried grasses. We moved and she made a noise and they disappeared—the babies first, then the mother, then another adult, who had been sleeping in the grass. The sentinel walked to the shaded side of the rock and stared at us from there.

I had almost died, eaten alive, and I was glad to be alive. The scars had healed. Three long dents ran around the arm and the leg, blurred with spider tracks of canine punctures. The one war wound, the bump that grew where I hit the hyena, still hurt, but I was back in Africa. ♦

## ANNALS OF LAW

# THE AGONIZER

*Everything about Justice Kennedy's performance on the Supreme Court has been unexpected, particularly the way he has become its decisive voice.*

### BY JEFFREY ROSEN

FOR the past nine years, under the auspices of McGeorge School of Law, in Sacramento, Justice Anthony Kennedy has taught summer classes in constitutional law at the University of Salzburg. The Salzburg law faculty recently moved to a sixteenth-century Baroque palace in the center of the old city, and Room 206, on the second floor of the former residence of the Archduke of Tuscany, is a bright, sunny lecture hall, with a high, vaulted ceiling and Tuscan pillars.

One morning in July, at precisely nine o'clock, Justice Kennedy strode to the lectern. He was fastidiously dressed, in dark-gray pinstripes, polished black oxfords, and stylish ovate glasses without rims. (Conservative critics have anxiously compared the new spectacles to those of a doctoral student from Heidelberg; at the time of his nomination, Kennedy had worn plain, American aviator glasses.) The only casual note was a blue Jansport knapsack slung across his right shoulder. He removed his gold watch, put it on a black pallet by the lectern, and spoke without notes.

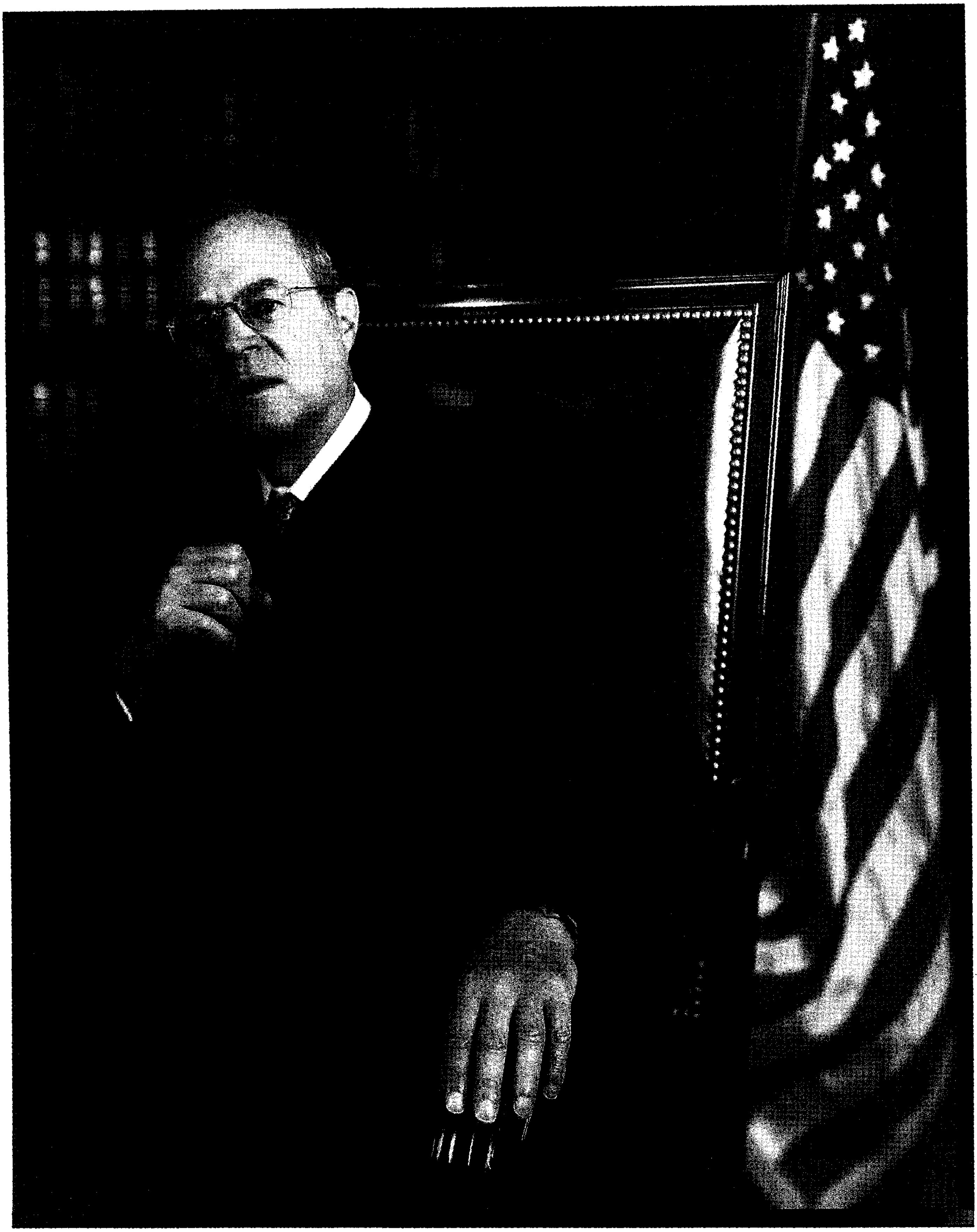
Justice Kennedy is a very good teacher. He is passionate about his subject, and respectful of even the slowest students. His topic that morning was free speech, and he was discussing his concurrence in Texas v. Johnson, the case that held, in 1989, that the First Amendment protects the right to burn the flag. "This case, like others before us from time to time, exacts its personal toll," Kennedy had written. "The hard fact is that sometimes we must make decisions we do not like." In the classroom, Justice Kennedy confessed that he was no longer sure that the concurrence was a good idea. "You never know what your *audience* is for this," he said, haltingly. "I've never quite had a precise grasp of whom you're writing for. . . . But just before this opinion went out I thought, Well, maybe I should say a little something. So I went to Brennan"—William Brennan, the former Justice—"and he said, 'Fine, issue it.' There's actually something *objectionable* in my concurrence . . . this hand-wringing thing." Here Kennedy mocked himself. " 'Oh, isn't this terrible?' " he exclaimed, wringing his hands. "I think what's wrong is: 'Wait a minute, who are you, Justice of the Supreme Court, to say that some idea is not a *good* idea? Who are you, anyway? I thought you were supposed to defend the speech clause. . . . Why all the crybaby stuff?' "

The spectacle of a Supreme Court Justice publicly agonizing about the merits of his own decision is unusual in itself, but, just the week before I arrived in Salzburg, Justice Kennedy had unburdened himself to his students even more dramatically. The students were especially struck, they told me, by his fervor in discussing his decision in the 1992 abortion case, Planned Parenthood v. Casey, in which he had changed his position unexpectedly and cast the crucial vote to uphold the core of Roe v. Wade. If a member of his family ever became pregnant, Justice Kennedy said, he would do his best to persuade her to keep the child. He would offer to adopt the baby, even to rear it himself, rather than sanction what he fervently believed was the taking of innocent life. At this point, students recall, Justice Kennedy's eyes filled with tears and his voice broke. But when it came time to decide the abortion case, Kennedy said, he couldn't impose his personal views on the nation.

The promise of judicial self-abnegation, of course, had been at the center of the debate over Justice Kennedy's nomination. In 1987, President Reagan, in an effort to consummate the judicial revolution that was the centerpiece of his domestic agenda, nominated Robert Bork to the Supreme Court. After the Senate rejected the Bork nomination, Reagan eventually settled on a less divisive candidate, Anthony Kennedy, who was endorsed by conservatives as a plausible epigone of their ideological ambitions. And yet, as Justice Kennedy approaches his ninth anniversary on the Court, it's startling to reflect what Judge Bork's replacement has wrought. On four of the most controversial social issues of our day—abortion, school prayer, flag-burning, and, most recently, gay rights—Kennedy has disappointed his conservative supporters by casting crucial votes to extend the liberal precedents he was appointed to overrule. Bork, in his new book, "Slouching Towards Gomorrah," indicates that he would have taken the opposite position in all four cases.

Last May, when Justice Kennedy delivered an opinion for the Court striking down an anti-gay-rights initiative passed by the citizens of Colorado and declaring that no state can reduce gays to the status of outlaws, Justice Antonin Scalia accused him of mistaking "a Kulturkampf for a fit of spite." But when Justice Kennedy intervenes in the culture wars he can hardly be considered a predictable ally of the political left. He believes that the Constitution is color-blind—that government should never classify citizens on the basis of race—and in a series of closely divided cases he has called into question affirmative-action programs and voting districts constructed for the benefit of blacks. These decisions have precipitated the most dramatic shift in American racial politics since the civil-rights era.

In all this, a pattern has emerged. Where Justice Kennedy goes, so goes the Supreme Court: for the past three terms, in 5–4 cases, he has voted with the majority more often than any other Justice, and so has been the pivotal figure in case after case. At a time when Chief Justice William Rehnquist appears to have lost interest in producing coalitions or legal arguments, Kennedy's views determine the Court's views in closely divided cases. His leadership, it should be said, is passive rather than active: other Justices must persuade him of *their* views, rather than the other way around. As a purely de-



*Justice Anthony Kennedy at the Supreme Court: When it came time to decide the abortion case, he told his students, he couldn't impose his personal views on the nation. Photograph by Michael Spano.*

scriptive matter, however, it hardly seems hyperbolic to call this the Kennedy Court.

SHORTLY after Justice Kennedy handed down his landmark decision in Romer v. Evans, the gay-rights case, I wrote to him asking if he might agree to be interviewed. He initially hesitated, for fear of appearing self-promoting; but when I persevered he invited me to Salzburg, where he talked at length about his judicial philosophy. The qualities that Justice Kennedy displayed during our conversations are qualities he displays in his judicial opinions. He has a self-dramatizing tendency, which leads him to worry about cases, both in public and in private, and to change his positions after casting his votes. ("It's easier to be a Rehnquist or a Scalia than a Kennedy," he once lamented to a reporter.) He makes a sincere, and admirable, effort to separate his own moral views, which are quite conservative, from his jurisprudential conclusions, which tend to be more libertarian. Few other Justices can point to so many important cases where their own views and their constitutional conclusions diverge: certainly Justice Scalia and Justice Clarence Thomas, for all their bluster about restraint, less frequently take positions they find personally uncongenial. Kennedy also has an idealistic faith in the citizens of the United States, and he expresses it with the earnestness of Jimmy Stewart. At the same time, he has a weakness for what the legal philosopher Karl Llewellyn called "the grand style"—an affinity for sweeping gestures, magisterially expressed. Consequently Justice Kennedy's opinions sometimes call to mind a high-school civics lesson that aspires to be chiselled on a monument. And the conflict aroused by his personal conservatism, his judicial libertarianism, and his expansive vision of the role of the Court has led—in the abortion and gay-rights cases, in particular—to an anguished assertiveness that has not entirely satisfied partisans on either side.

In his effort to resurrect an older model of the Supreme Court Justice as Platonic guardian, Kennedy is self-consciously rejecting the ideals of the conservative judicial revolution. Far from reducing the role of the Supreme Court in deciding contested questions of social policy, Kennedy has enlarged it. In this sense, his performance on the Court most nearly resembles that of another even-tempered, good-hearted, moderate Republican from California: Chief Justice Earl Warren, a family friend at whose feet Kennedy played as a toddler. Warren had a similar impatience with the niceties of legal doctrine, a penchant for expressing simple constitutional principles in ringing terms, and a lack of concern about the costs of short-circuiting political debates by means of extravagant demonstrations of judicial power. Indeed, with the exception of his opinions about criminal procedure, Kennedy has extended Warren's activist legacy instead of dismantling it, and so has embraced the very judicial icon he was appointed to topple.

WHEN Kennedy was nominated to the Supreme Court, at the age of fifty-one, he lived in the same Sacramento house that he'd grown up in; attended the Roman Catholic church that he'd served as an altar boy; and had spent much of his career as a lawyer and lobbyist, as a result of inheriting the family business of his father, Anthony J. Kennedy. The father was a backslapping, well-connected attorney who represented tobacco and liquor interests and threw back-yard parties for prominent California politicians.

Anthony, the middle of three children, was a model of filial piety and unruffled achievement: at the age of eleven, he became the youngest page in the history of the California State Senate. He went on to Stanford, spent an undergraduate year at the London School of Economics, and, in 1961, graduated from Harvard Law School. When his father died, unexpectedly, of a heart attack, two years later, Kennedy took over his practice, which included drafting wills, doing corporate work for gas producers and agricultural importers, and lobbying. Pete Wilson, the governor of California, who, as a United States senator, sponsored Kennedy's nomination to the Supreme Court, recalls that in the nineteen-sixties, when he was a young state legislator, Kennedy reluctantly lobbied him on behalf of local opticians. "I don't think he especially enjoyed it. I don't think he found himself in his natural niche," Governor Wilson told me. "Tony never hung out in the bistros."

The year his father died, Kennedy married Mary Davis, whom he'd known since childhood, and who taught, like his mother, in the San Francisco public schools. In quick succession, the couple had three children, all of whom went on to attend Stanford and are now working in New York. The Kennedys are a close family: when Kennedy was nominated to the Supreme Court, he wrote his children that, of all his achievements, being a husband and father made him the most proud. Today, Greg Kennedy, the middle son, is a lawyer who conducts screening interviews of his father's clerkship applicants, to the discomfort of some of them.

After Ronald Reagan was elected governor, in 1966, his chief of staff, Ed Meese, cast about for a local constitutional lawyer to help draft Proposition 1, an early tax-cutting ballot initiative. Kennedy, who had met Meese through a mutual friend, volunteered for the job. Proposition 1 was defeated in 1973, but Meese and Kennedy hit it off, and the following year, when a seat became vacant on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, Reagan urged President Ford to nominate Kennedy. Ford granted this favor, in the vain hope of fending off a primary challenge from Reagan, and Kennedy was confirmed by the Senate in 1975. At the age of thirty-eight, he was the youngest federal appellate judge in the country.

"Reagan started this business of appointing young judges," Kennedy told me, adding that he now believes that he was appointed to the bench too early. "You shouldn't go on the Court until you know what sort of person you are," he said. "When I was in my twenties, I thought, Gee, I must be just probably the best lawyer in Sacramento. I look back now at the way I behaved and the judges were saying, 'Who is this young kid anyway?' You know?" The idea of a President's appointing young judges is "a little frightening, because it's a very quiet existence," Kennedy continued wistfully. "You have the blue brief and the red brief for thirty years, and that's about it. You don't see real people—you're not in a real courtroom, in the sense of juries, and attorneys shouting at each other, and your having to keep order." Kennedy also believes that young judges make hard decisions too quickly: "You might think it's easier, and you might not recognize your own limitations."

As an appellate judge, Kennedy said, "if I wasn't sure, I could write around the facts, leaving room for another panel, or for myself when I revisited it, to correct it." But as a Supreme Court Justice, "when you take a case, because the system is waiting for an answer, if you write closely around the facts, you're not doing your job. . . . It's not going to help them. Of course, if you write it *too* broadly you make a mistake, so you have to get it into the *middle.*"

Justice Kennedy looked pensive. "But it's very difficult, and you *are* a teacher . . . and the cases are *hard.* They are *very* hard. . . . My clerks come up and say, 'This is a really hard case.' Well, I know it. *Tell* me about it." Mrs. Kennedy told a colleague that Justice Kennedy, before casting his vote in the gay-rights case, had gone into his study and closed the door for a long time. I asked him whether, after a hard case, he lies awake at night wondering whether it came out the right way. "Since I'm more of an agonizer than many of our colleagues, you might suspect I agonize after," he replied. "I don't agonize after the fact. I know that I've done the best I can. That's it."

THE apparent calm of Kennedy's public life—the blameless childhood; the loving family, untouched by scandal; the steady progress to the final preferment—masks a series of personal misfortunes. In 1980, his sister died of cancer. During the next eighteen months, his mother died, and his younger brother, Timothy, drowned in a surfing accident. Last year, Timothy's twenty-year-old son died, after his car flipped over in the Mojave Desert. "I talked to him after his nephew died, and he was very shaken up," I was told by Judge Alex Kozinski, who clerked for Kennedy before becoming his colleague on the United States Court of Appeals in 1985. "But you really had to know him well, because he manages to keep those sorts of things very, very private."

On the Supreme Court, Justice Kennedy has largely succeeded in duplicating the carefully regimented and protected life that he enjoyed for so long in Sacramento. He arrives at the Court very early most mornings, at about five-thirty or six. As he drives from his home, in McLean, Virginia, he sometimes listens to tapes he has asked his clerks to prepare which summarize the briefs and the main arguments in the cases of the day. With his office door closed, he works for two or three hours, then showers in his office and prepares to present himself to the world. On days when the Court sits, he hears arguments from ten until lunch, and spends the afternoon working on opinions, answering mail, discussing cases with his clerks, and polishing speeches about Supreme Court history. He will then return home, unless he and Mrs. Kennedy have a dinner engagement in town. Justice Kennedy has confessed that he finds the embassy dinner circuit fascinating, and a former clerk says, "When the Court car takes him to a party, you can tell he's very happy to step out of it." He appears to enjoy the trappings of office far more than a colleague like Justice David Souter, who spends most of his evenings at the office, buried in books.

All in all, Kennedy leads the kind of life that you might expect a Supreme Court Justice to lead if you were constructing your impression of the Court from a civics textbook: diligent, earnest, gracious, gentlemanly, a little bland, patriotic, uncynical, and full of official parties with important dignitaries. He is a man whose only visible personal vice appears to be a weakness for innocent pomp.

In the wake of Kennedy's 1992 decisions reaffirming the fundamental right to abortion and the unconstitutionality of graduation prayers in public schools, however, his conservative critics began to draw unflattering connections between his social ambitions and his jurisprudence. They accused him of a weakness for the approval of liberal journalists, scholars, and law clerks. After the abortion decision, in an essay entitled "The Tempting of Justice Kennedy," published in the conservative *American Spectator*, Terry Eastland suggested that Kennedy had abandoned his own principles because of the "Greenhouse Effect," which melodramatic conservatives have described as a craving for the approval of Linda Greenhouse, the *Times'* Supreme Court correspondent, and of other purportedly "activist court reporters." Last May, the conservative weekly *Human Events* declared, "On all three of the most controversial social issues of our time—abortion, religion and homosexuality—Kennedy has gone with the flow of elite liberal opinion, rather than to endure the slings and arrows that adherence to his moral and juridical principles would bring in Georgetown salons."

But the conservative caricature of Justice Kennedy is too simplistic to be entirely convincing. In fact, his struggles to make up his mind show, in some respects, precisely the qualities one would hope to find in a Supreme Court Justice. According to his clerks, Kennedy has a habit of trying on competing positions, like hats in a fitting room, and wearing them for a while to see whether or not they seem comfortable. After discussing a case for hours with his clerks, often sketching out the various arguments on a white board that he keeps on an easel in his chambers, he will announce that he is persuaded to accept one side. The next morning, he will sometimes arrive at work and announce, a bit sheepishly, that he has been thinking about the case overnight and is now persuaded to take

*"I now pronounce you man and cleavage."*

"Your check, on a bed of polenta."

the opposite position. He may go back and forth for several rounds before finally settling on a tentative resting point.

"Judges are *human*," Justice Kennedy told me confidingly. "I'll talk about politics with my wife or children, and I find it's very hard to be neutral. . . . You have these preconceptions that you have to try to recognize. And this is the art of judging. You always have this, and you live with it." The indecision can be harrowing for Kennedy's clerks and his colleagues. And Justice Kennedy may, in some cases, be swayed by the temptations of public approval. "When we were having conversations about what the Constitution required and what the precedents required," one former Kennedy clerk recalled, "he would constantly refer to how it's going to be perceived, how the papers are going to do it, how it's going to look." But at least some of the time Justice Kennedy deserves credit for changing his mind after grappling with conflicting principles in hard cases.

Conservatives have also accused Kennedy of being a weak-willed pawn of his law clerks, tacking left and right from year to year. But Kennedy's positions in what might be called the Kulturkampf cases are broadly consistent with the elastic vision of constitutional liberty and equality which he embraced in his confirmation hearings. He had announced to the Senate Judiciary Committee that the American people have a "shared vision" that includes "the idea that each man and woman has the freedom and the capacity to develop to his or her own potential." It was hardly a betrayal of his own principles, therefore, when he took a similarly sweeping view of the scope of constitutional liberty in his contribution to the abortion decision. Furthermore, those who applaud this very abstract vision of the state's obligation to be neutral about morality in the abortion and gay-rights cases can hardly object when Justice Kennedy applies a similarly abstract vision of neutrality in cases that question affirmative-action programs or require wholesale redistricting of congressional maps.

Kennedy's libertarian jurisprudence evokes the libertarian politics of his friend and sponsor Pete Wilson. Both men, in their public positions, are unexpectedly pro-choice, occasionally pro-gay rights, relentlessly tough on crime, and unalterably opposed to affirmative action. "I almost always find myself agreeing with his views," Wilson told me. "I think it strikes him as terribly unfair that anyone's individual potential should be in any way limited by their being classed as a member of a group, and treated in accordance with their group membership, rather than what they deserve to receive as individuals. I think that's just part of his own gut reaction."

But Kennedy's willingness to read the libertarian vision of John Stuart Mill into the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution is hard to reconcile with the principle on which he staked his nomination: judicial restraint. During his confirmation hearings, he said that "the unrestrained exercise of judicial power is to declare laws unconstitutional merely because of a disagreement with their wisdom."

But although Justice Kennedy can't be accused of writing his personal preferences into law (except, perhaps, in cases involving race and crime), his jurisprudence clashes with another conception of judicial restraint. He shows little compunction about allowing unelected judges, rather than democratic legislatures, to decide controversial questions of social policy. His jurisprudence, therefore, can be legitimately criticized—as the Warren Court's was—for inattention to the risks of inviting the Justices of the Supreme Court to assume the role of Platonic guardians. "You know the problem," Justice Kennedy told me. "What's the appropriate stopping point, so that you don't have a national legislature with the scope of the Supreme Court?" This is a problem that Justice Kennedy has not yet answered in a way that is entirely satisfying to himself or to anyone else.

AT the University of Salzburg, Kennedy begins a lecture by asking his class why a democracy should protect free speech, and his lectures on the subject show him at his most rigorous and sympathetic. Kennedy's First Amendment opinions are the most impressive part of his judicial legacy—the area in which his suspicion of state power and his fondness for sweeping constitutional principles can be most plausibly linked to the text of the Constitution.

In Salzburg, several students take the position that Robert Bork embraced before his confirmation hearings—that the First Amendment protects only political speech—and Kennedy resists the suggestion. Free speech is also a component of "personal autonomy," he insists. "It's part of your expression of yourself, it's part of your being able to identify yourself as a person."

In his appealing, Frank Capra mode, Justice Kennedy emphasizes that citizens won't revere the Constitution if judges make exceptions to the First Amendment. "Because Americans can identify their freedom of speech with the Constitution, and this gives them a stake in the Constitution," he says. "There is this very happy, felicitous linkage between the two. I have personal autonomy, I have free speech, I have the right to watch the television show I want, because the Constitution gives it to me. And that gives a support to the Constitution, which, as I say, needs allegiance and loyalty and renewal and understanding each generation, or else it's *not going to last*."

As a Supreme Court Justice, he goes on to say, he is uncomfortable taking public positions on moral issues. "This is a little hard. I mean, if I went to Hollywood and talked about movies, it would sound like a very prudish lecture, because of the kinds of movies *I watch*. I think it's very hard for me to say I'm taking off the judge hat and putting on the private-citizen hat." Public officials should always be neutral, he says, so that private citizens can be free to argue for their own religious and moral principles. "Relativism leads to skepticism, skepticism to indifference, and indifference leads to cynicism," he declares. "Cynicism is corrosive of all good human institutions. And what this country must begin to recognize is that it has the capacity and the responsibility to make sensible decisions based on values. It's just the *government's* hands off."

If Kennedy is at his best in free-speech cases, the weaknesses of his jurisprudence are perhaps most apparent in the abortion case, Planned Parenthood v. Casey. Kennedy's critics were especially dismayed by a somewhat theatrical interview that the Justice granted to Terry Carter, a writer for *California Lawyer*, in June, 1992, on the morning the Court handed down the Casey decision. "He stands at the window of his high-ceilinged chambers, waiting to go on the bench, looking down at the crowd of competing protesters in the plaza below," Carter reported. " 'Sometimes you don't know if you're Caesar about to cross the Rubicon,' he says, his voice becoming almost inaudible, 'or Captain Queeg cutting your own tow line.' " Ten minutes before entering the courtroom, Kennedy announced that he wanted to be alone. "I need to brood," he murmured. Kennedy's performance was not well received by conservatives. "He did himself a great disservice with that Caesar-crossing-the-Rubicon line," a former Kennedy clerk says. "People were howling with laughter."

In the aftermath of the Casey decision, conservatives speculated that Kennedy had been bewitched by Laurence Tribe, the Harvard law professor who had enthusiastically testified for Kennedy after opposing the nomination of Robert Bork. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, in a column on the abortion decision, suggested that Tribe had persuaded Justices Kennedy and Souter that they should hire two of his former students, Michael Dorf and Peter Rubin. The columnists also suggested that, although Kennedy had initially indicated that he would join Chief Justice Rehnquist in overturning Roe v. Wade, Tribe and his protégés Dorf and Rubin successfully lobbied him to change his vote.

But a reconstruction of the events leading up to Justice Kennedy's decision in the abortion case undermines the portrait of him as a helpless puppet of Tribe. In the Webster case, three years before, Kennedy had joined Rehnquist's opinion suggesting that abortion might not be a "fundamental right" but, instead, a "liberty interest," subject to reasonable governmental regulation. In his own mind, however, he had perhaps not decided the ultimate question, which was about whether or not abortions could be regulated before fetal viability. When it came time to decide Planned Parenthood v. Casey, the discussion at the Justices' conference table was typically terse. Seven Justices—all but John Paul Stevens and Harry Blackmun, the author of Roe v. Wade—voted to uphold most of the restrictions at issue in Casey, including a twenty-four-hour waiting period and a parental-consent provision. Rehnquist then assigned himself the task of writing an opinion for the majority which would formally repudiate Roe's central premise—that abortion is a fundamental right. But Kennedy, who always views his positions as fluid until an opinion is released, did not feel he had firmly committed himself to joining Rehnquist's reasoning.

It was Justice David Souter, according to clerks, who first formally proposed to Justice Kennedy and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor that the three meet in secret, to explore the possibility of an opinion that would preserve the core of Roe v. Wade. After Kennedy met with Souter and O'Connor, he returned to his chambers, called Dorf into his office, and said, in effect, We're writing; here's the assignment; we're keeping it secret. In contrast to his usual practice, Kennedy concealed his deliberations from his three other clerks, bringing one of them, a committed conservative, close to tears of frustration.

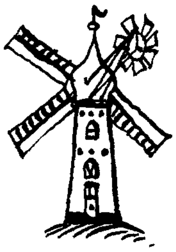
As he struggled with the abortion case in private, Justice Kennedy may have been moved by appeals from his wife. The Kennedys are observant Catholics, but Mary Kennedy's personal views concerning the constitutionality of abortion restrictions appear to be less anguished than the ones her husband expressed in Salzburg. Kennedy's close friend Gordon Schaber, a former dean of McGeorge School of Law, recalls having dinner with the Kennedys shortly after the Justice joined the Court. The conversation turned to whether or not Roe v. Wade should be overruled, and Mrs. Kennedy, according to Schaber, said to her husband, "Don't you dare!" And a few years later, when this decision came out, Schaber says, "I just knew that the influence she had on him was very great." Justice Kennedy, for his part, says that the exchange "could never have happened"; but if it did, Mrs. Kennedy was speaking in "mock horror."

When Kennedy anxiously revealed to Rehnquist that he would not be joining Rehnquist's opinion after all, the Chief Justice, according to clerks, told Kennedy that the decision was his to make, and he had to do what he thought was right. (Scalia, by contrast, was so upset that he walked over to Kennedy's nearby house in McLean to upbraid him.) Until the final days before the opinion circulated, Kennedy continued to waver, and he mused openly about the possibility of writing a brief opinion that would uphold the abortion restrictions at issue in Casey without deciding the broader question of whether abortion is a fundamental right. Until the very last moment, he wanted reassurance from Dorf about peripheral points and technical details, as confirmation that his libertarian instincts could be legally supported. Dorf's influence consisted in assuaging Kennedy's doubts about procedural details, and providing detailed legal arguments to buttress Kennedy's own expansive impulses. But both the language and the core principles of Kennedy's section of the final decision were his own.

The first and last sentences of the Casey opinion, for example, were written by Kennedy. "Liberty finds no refuge in a jurisprudence of doubt,” he began, and he self-consciously made the first word the last word as well: he invoked the Court’s responsibility “once again to define the freedom guaranteed by the Constitution’s own promise, the promise of liberty.” Kennedy also contributed the lofty adages within the opinion: “At the heart of liberty is the right to define one’s own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life.”

When I brought up the subject of the abortion case, I told Justice Kennedy that his students were struck by his confession in class that he would do anything in his power to dissuade a member of his family from having an abortion.

Kennedy seemed a little flustered. “I had forgotten that. We, of course, in our family and our tradition—I doubt that anybody would go that route, but that isn’t the world out there. There are many people out there who *don’t* have supportive families, who don’t have *any* families. They have boyfriends, or even pimps, who’re going to beat them up if they find out about it. It’s that sort of world out there. Now, that doesn’t mean that there aren’t important moral concerns, which everybody should be aware of. I’ve already talked a little more about that case than I want. I had forgotten that class.”



Kennedy also said, I reminded him, that when it came time to make the final decision he felt he couldn’t impose his personal views on the nation.

He replied, “Ultimately, the issue is one that is so perplexing for many people—it’s not perplexing for me, I know where I come out—it’s *so* perplexing that I suppose Casey could be read for the proposition that it’s a decision that the individual has to make. But that’s for others to say as they read the opinion. I’d rather not speculate. That’s how many commentators have read it.”

So was it, in the end, a reluctance to impose his personal views on the nation that motivated Kennedy to take the position he did?

“I don’t want to talk too much about Casey,” he said, “but I wouldn’t disagree with that.”

JUSTICE KENNEDY likes to ornament his most important opinions with aphorisms, and his contributions are usually easy to identify: “Racial bias mars the integrity of the judicial system and prevents the idea of democratic government from becoming a reality,” he wrote in Edmonson v. Leesville Concrete, which held that private litigants in civil cases can’t refuse to accept jurors on the basis of race. (Kennedy has told friends that all four of his clerks were unconvinced by his conclusion, so he had to write the decision himself.) Like Chief Justice Warren, Kennedy views this kind of sonorous rhetoric as a vehicle for communicating basic constitutional principles to ordinary citizens.

Still, a weakness for elevated prose carries literary risks. Many of Justice Kennedy’s orotund constructions, according to clerks, result from his insistence on removing adverbs from draft opinions; he will cross out the word “quickly,” for example, and substitute “with great speed.” And the magisterial quality of Justice Kennedy’s prose provides little guidance to lower-court judges, who may seize on elements of it as a blank check. In a recent right-to-die decision, for example, the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit invoked Justice Kennedy’s language about the mystery of human life to justify its discovery of a previously unrecognized constitutional right to determine “the time and manner of one’s death.” This provoked one of Kennedy’s former colleagues in California, Judge Robert Beezer, to note dryly in dissent that the right to define one’s own concept of existence, taken out of context, “is so broad and melodramatic as to seem almost comical in its rhetorical flourish.”

Kennedy’s ode to the mystery of life cannot be criticized on the ground that it is indecisive or weak-willed, or doesn’t mean what it says, or was foisted on him against his better judgment. The fairer criticism, perhaps, is that Justice Kennedy’s vision of liberty is at times so abstract that its limits are difficult for anyone but Justice Kennedy himself to discern.

WHEN Justice Kennedy called to invite me to lunch, he suggested that we might bicycle to the restaurant if the weather was good, and recommended that I wear a sports shirt. But the next morning there was a slight drizzle, and so, at precisely eleven-forty-five, Justice Kennedy pulled up to my hotel, the Salzburg Sheraton, in a gunmetal-gray compact driven by Johannes, the son of the Austrian ambassador to the United States, who was working as a summer intern for McGeorge law school. Kennedy was wearing a tattersall button-down shirt, gray slacks, and polished black loafers with tassels. Fifteen minutes later, we were at the Gasthof Schloss Aigen, a charming country inn nestled in the foothills of the Gaisberg, not far from where Julie Andrews spun about in “The Sound of Music,” and also not far from Berchtesgaden, and Hitler’s Eagle’s Nest. After showing me the pastoral mountain walks that begin off Lotte Lehmann Promenade, Justice Kennedy led the way to the rustic dining room, and we settled ourselves at a table by the window.

Justice Kennedy has the reputation of being something of a wine connoisseur, and, at his suggestion, after a glass of the local beer, we ordered Lackner-Tinnacher, a local sauvignon blanc. He is also an enthusiastic reader of historical fiction, and he recommended a book called “Fin-de-Siècle Vienna,” by Carl Schorske. “There’s a very beautiful line,” Kennedy recalled dreamily, referring to an admonition to the Austrians after the Franco-Prussian War. “It said, ‘You have killed this world, you have killed this beautiful world. Now you must rebuild it; you must rebuild this beautiful world, but you first must rebuild it in your breast.’ It has lovely things like that.”

Over Rindsuppe and Rheinankenfilet, Justice Kennedy became expansive about the state of American civilization. I asked him about his declaration, in class, that the Constitution requires the state to be absolutely neutral in the public sphere, so that citizens are free to express their personalities in the private sphere. Did Kennedy think that citizens understood the distinction?

“I wonder if they think of their government in those terms,” he replied. “In a way, the adversary aspect of our own profession has had a bad carryover, it seems to me. Our society is too *fractious*. You look at the morning talk shows, in which there’s an adversarial tone. . . . It’s carried too far, it destroys a sense of community and a sense of mission and a sense of purpose. And a nation has to have a sense of purpose.” Kennedy said that he was preparing a speech about civility for the American Bar Association, in which he would argue against the notion that “you have a fifteen-minute course on civility and go on with the rest of your work—have-you-hugged-your-adversary-today, bumper-sticker-type thing.” He emphasized that “civility springs from our basic ethical notion of tolerance,” and that “tolerance, in turn, rests on the recognition that individuals are entitled to respect because they're human."

Justice Kennedy asked if I remembered the story about the teen-agers in Los Angeles who videotaped themselves beating a bystander with a baseball bat. "The press picked it up for a number of their legitimate reasons, one of which is they were videotaping the crime, which seemed to be the rage now," Kennedy recalled, "and the *lawlessness* of it." With the same passion for law and order that he expresses in his opinions about criminal procedure, Kennedy said that he was more shocked by the cavalier indifference of the classmates than by the crime itself. "There was a complete lack of a moral capacity. I mean, if somebody hit *you* with a baseball bat, *hard:* a) you'd never forget it; b) you probably couldn't do your work, or concentrate for a period of months. You'd have physical pain. They didn't connect with that at all. That's so disturbing to me. I'm not going to despair about the moral qualities of the American people, but we have to begin thinking about what we're teaching our young people. Values are not inherited; they're taught."

Despite his rhetoric about judicial restraint, Justice Kennedy suggested, to my surprise, that a judge's moral values can't be separated from his jurisprudence. "Every one of my colleagues knows how lonely this job is," he said. "You have your law clerks and your colleagues and the lawyers and the briefs, but in the last analysis it's your own morality, your own sense of law, your own ethics, your own commitment as a judge, your own oath to the Constitution. Every time, I think, Oh, well, you know we won't have to do this next time. We've had these kinds of cases, next time will be an easy case. And then they keep shipping them up. They keep coming up."

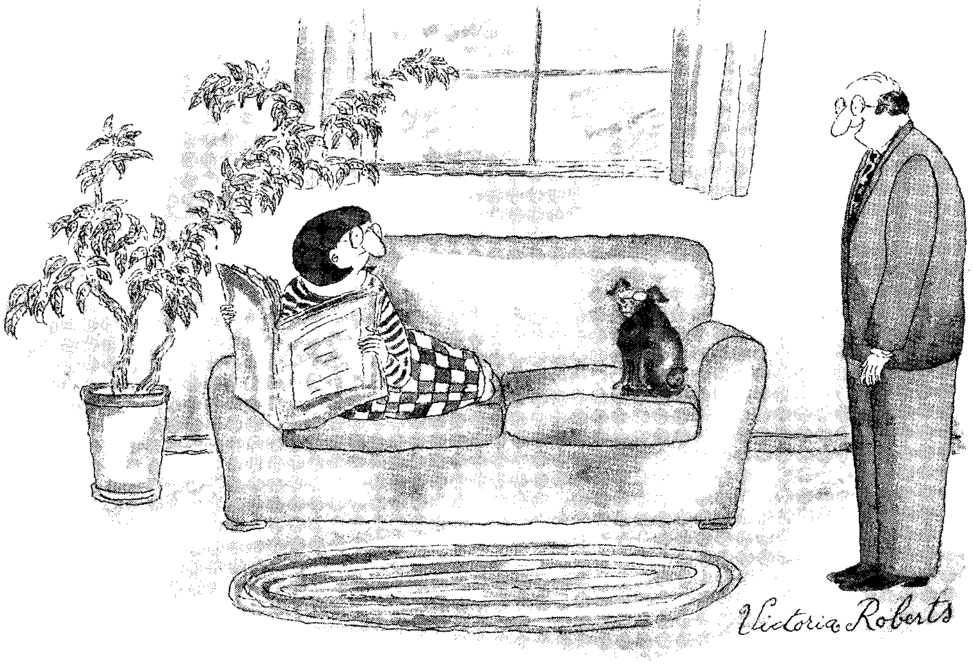
Kennedy looked at me soberly. "I tell people, when they ask about it, in the Court, after one of these cases is decided, the five in the majority—if there are five in the majority—don't have a lot of smiles and handshakes and high fives," he said. "There's a *quietness*. There's stillness, as you recognize, no matter which case, which position prevails, that there are long-term consequences that are the result of our verdict. And we like to say that it's the force of the Constitution, as we must. But it's hard. And that's what the framers wanted."

His reference to the framers of the Constitution was unexpected: in his opinions, he uses historical arguments selectively rather than consistently. A judge consistently committed to interpreting the Constitution according to the original understanding of its drafters would, after all, find it difficult to insist that the Constitution is color-blind in all circumstances, as Kennedy suggests. To use the nineteenth-century distinction, the authors and ratifiers of the Fourteenth Amendment expected that civil rights—but not necessarily social or political rights—would be extended to all citizens without reference to race. I asked Justice Kennedy whether, because he doesn't claim to be bound by the doctrine of original understanding, he felt free to define the scope of the color-blind principle more sweepingly. "I think that's probably true, probably true," Kennedy said. "The answer is I'm uneasy, but that doesn't mean that the philosophy's wrong. Trying to assess the broader purpose and intent of the framers is more difficult. But that doesn't mean that it's less of a philosophy, the fact that you don't know the answers, or can't find it easily."

THE week before I arrived in Salzburg, Justice Scalia drove from Vienna, where he was teaching his own Austrian summer course, to deliver a guest lecture. Standing before Kennedy's students, he passionately addressed one of the central intellectual concerns of lawyers and judges in the twentieth century. He attacked the doctrine of "substantive due process," which holds that judges should feel free to identify certain fundamental liberties that are not listed explicitly in the Constitution and protect these liberties from governmental infringement. Scalia took the same position that Learned Hand embraced early in the century; he insisted that the due-process clause ("No State shall . . . deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law") merely insures that citizens can't be deprived of liberty without fair judicial *procedures.* It does not, he argued, authorize judges to go beyond the text of the Constitution and discover new substantive rights or liberties—giving license to judges to conduct a roving council of constitutional revision.

I asked Kennedy how, without an overarching judicial philosophy, he goes about giving content to such abstract phrases as the due-process clause, which he had invoked in Casey, the landmark abortion case. "It's true that at some time there must be a core of individuality that the state is bound to respect," he said. "That has to be the meaning of due process—in its substantive component."

What, I asked, was Justice Kennedy's solution to the problem that Scalia identified: when judges take it upon themselves to define the scope of constitutional liberty, the Supreme Court may become an unelected legislature? Many critics of the abortion decision, for example, have suggested that the language about defin-



*"I love the new me, Virginia."*

ing one's own concept of existence and of the universe is too abstract for other judges to apply in a coherent way. "Well, that's the beauty of the case-by-case system," Kennedy replied. "I guess you wait for the next case. We decide cases, we don't write textbooks." But wasn't he worried that his very abstract language about "liberty" might give too broad a license to lower courts? "I think probably the dangers of too narrow construction, too rigid a refusal to accept the idea that liberty has a substantive component, is far more dangerous than allowing courts gently, when they must, to probe the dimensions of liberty."

Like his section of the abortion opinion, Justice Kennedy's opinion in Romer v. Evans, the gay-rights case, contains sweeping language that seems to resonate far beyond the facts of the case. Kennedy wrote that the anti-gay-rights amendment passed by the citizens of Colorado "seems inexplicable by anything but animus" toward gays and lesbians and that no state can "deem a class of persons a stranger to its laws," treating homosexual citizens as outlaws and denying them access to ordinary legal protection. His decision surprised his closest friends. "I might have predicted with confidence his views in the First Amendment area, I could have predicted Casey, but I'm not sure I could have predicted the equality cases," Judge Kozinski said. "I don't know what his views on homosexuality are, but my guess is that they aren't as tolerant as some other people's. That's his jurisprudential view, not his policy view."

No one is sure whether Justice Kennedy's opinion in the gay-rights case tacitly overrules Bowers v. Hardwick, the 1986 opinion that held that the states are free to prohibit homosexual sodomy. Many commentators, such as Ronald Dworkin, in the *New York Review of Books*, have suggested that Kennedy's language contradicts the Court's earlier holding that states may, if they choose, express moral contempt for homosexual conduct. I asked Justice Kennedy what he thought of Dworkin's argument that the two cases can't be reconciled. "I'm not going to comment," he said appropriately, for fear of signalling his views on an issue that may divide the Court during the next few years.

When I tried to pursue the question—I had assumed, from reading Kennedy's opinion, that Romer and Bowers *could* be reconciled—Kennedy gently signalled that our lunch was over. "It will be interesting to see how Romer is understood," Kennedy said, neutrally. And, on that note, he called for the check, which we split down the middle.

ONLY Justice Kennedy, in the end, can tell us how Romer and Casey will be understood, and whether his sweeping language about the right of individuals to define their own concept of existence will, in the Court's current term, be extended to its logical limits, and spawn ever more expansive new rights, such as the right to doctor-assisted suicide. But the difficulty of predicting with confidence just how Justice Kennedy is likely to answer these vexing questions points to the most serious objection to his jurisprudence. If one defines the commands of the Constitution so abstractly that the words themselves fade from view, and are supplanted by an amorphous command that the state must be neutral, or that individuals must be free to make up their own minds about the mystery of human life, then our most contentious moral and political debates really are over before they have begun.

At some point during the next four years, the President may well have the opportunity to select a new Chief Justice. Kennedy is said to be interested in the job. And if Bill Clinton should want a Chief Justice in his own image—earnest, idealistic, gregarious, fair-minded, willing to take public positions that offend his own policy preferences, and able to feel the pain of those he disappoints—he might be more comfortable with Anthony Kennedy than with one of his own nominees. Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer, who absorbed the right lessons from the conservative judicial revolution, are, in general, less likely than Justice Kennedy to second-guess the choices of the political branches, and are more wary of majestic pronouncements in the grand style. But now that liberals have finally weaned themselves of the urge to let judges fight their battles for them, aren't Ginsburg's measured motions a more appropriate ideal than Kennedy's sweeping gestures? On this point, Kennedy seems divided against himself. "Society has to recognize that it has to confront hard decisions in neutral, rational, dispassionate debate," Kennedy told me. "And not just leave it to courts." Behind the rimless spectacles, his pale-blue eyes flashed. "That's a *weak* society that leaves it to courts." ♦

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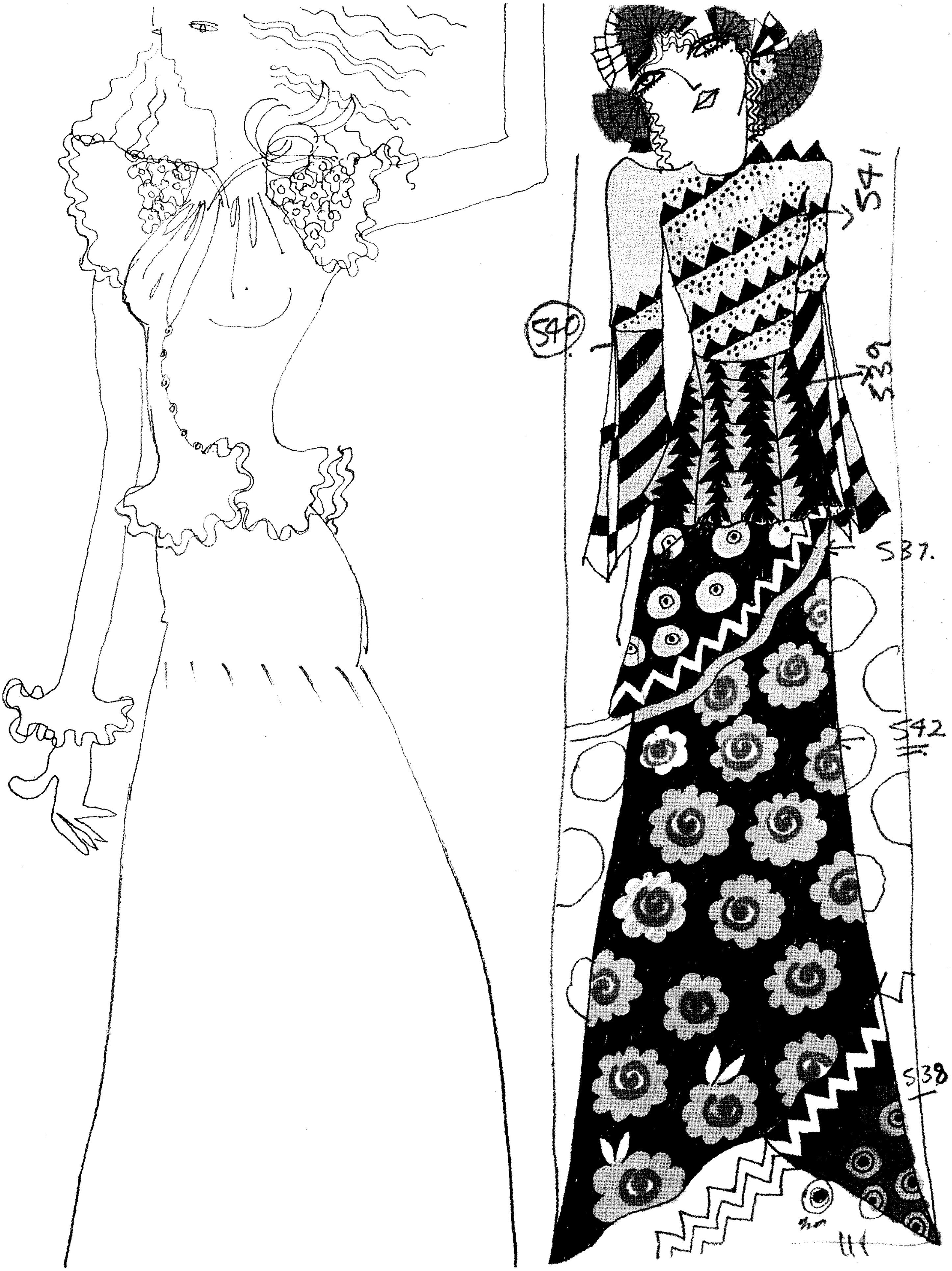
ANNALS OF FASHION

# LAST LOOK

FROM 1967 to 1974, Ossie Clark was Mr. Excitement—he was designer to the icons of the age, and at the hub of every London happening. With his androgynous swaybacked silhouette, Beatles mop, and wild-thing disposition, Clark was himself an emblem of that era, and he faded along with it. By the late seventies, he had been cold-shouldered by the fashion industry; by the eighties, he was bankrupt; and by the nineties his life was alternating between has-been reclusiveness and Grand Guignol excess, the headlines crescendoing from an arrest for biting a policeman to this summer's Ortonesque story of his murder, at the age of fifty-six, and the subsequent arrest of his young lover.

It has taken Ossie Clark's premature death for the fashion world to reevaluate his talent. Stars of today such as Bella Freud, Bruce Oldfield, and Manolo Blahnik have acknowledged their debt. Clark, who modelled himself on the masters of couture, could think in three dimensions—draping, folding, and notching a garment to spiral itself around the body without a beginning or an end. His inspiration, like that of Celia Birtwell, his wife (until 1975) and collaborator, came in part from Portobello Road fashion, to which the designer gave a gossamer touch of English fantasy. David Hockney brilliantly captures their differences in his famous double portrait, now at the Tate: Ossie lounging faraway-eyed; Celia standing sturdily, a *Madonna del parto* with tumbling curls. When she finally divorced him, he drifted irrevocably off course. "He wanted to play more than work," Celia says. "Time was creeping on and he let his finger slip off the pulse."

—JULIE KAVANAGH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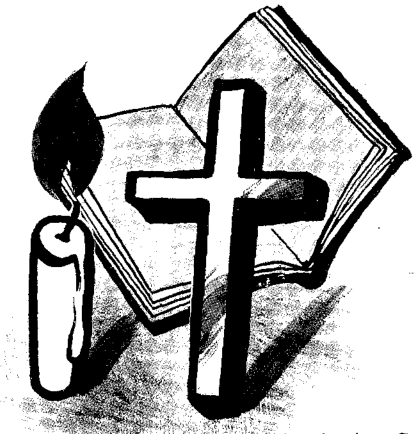
*Ossie Clark and Celia Birtwell (opposite) as students in 1966; dress designs by Clark (left) and Birtwell from the late sixties.*

## FICTION

# CONFESSION

*Whom does an unfaithful wife tell when her husband is a priest? The author imagines an episode based on his parents' marriage.*

### BY INGMAR BERGMAN



is the last Sunday in July, 1925, a hot, sunny afternoon in Stockholm. The church clock in the tower above the cupola strikes half past three. The streets are deserted. A tram is making its way laboriously up the hill along the west side of the churchyard that borders on the spacious square with its indoor market and theatre. At the stop, a woman gets off and stands there.

Anna.

She is wearing a beige suit, the ankle-length skirt a slightly darker color, high-heeled boots, and a simple shady hat. Her jacket is open over a white high-necked lace blouse. She is wearing no jewelry, except her wedding rings and small diamond earrings. She is clutching her pale leather handbag to her, her thin gloves thrust carelessly into the jacket pockets.

She takes off her hat and holds it in her left hand. Her thick dark hair is parted in the middle and gathered into a low knot that has begun to loosen. Her eyes are dark brown below the strongly drawn eyebrows and low, broad forehead. Her mouth is large, the lips friendly and generous.

Anna.

For twelve years she has been married to Henrik, the curate at the church with its majestic cupola and the clock that has just struck half past three. She is thirty-six and has three children, two boys and a girl.

She looks around and decides to take the route across the churchyard, perhaps sit on one of the green benches there for a while in the fragrance of the linden trees, a little cool, to breathe.

As always, she moves quickly and purposefully, her head slightly bowed, glancing swiftly to the side. Deserted and silent, not a soul.

So she is frightened when someone calls out her name. She flushes violently and looks round.

Uncle Jacob.

He is sitting on a bench by the church wall, deep in the shade of the trees. He waves invitingly with his big hand. "Hello, hello, Anna dear. Come on over and sit down for a moment. You can't be in all that much of a hurry. Come on, then."

Uncle Jacob is a tall man with slightly unruly iron-gray hair, a trim gray beard and mustache. High forehead, heavy large face, gray eyes, a largish nose, and a broad mouth with soft corners. His hands are large and shapely, with swollen veins and some irregular liver spots on them. His voice is deep, with a trace of an accent—Småland, I seem to remember. He is wearing his clerical garb, the thin gray summer coat and wide-brimmed hat lying on the bench. Jacob is sixty-four and has been the parish priest for twenty years. So he is Henrik's superior. Anna is given a pat on the cheek by that large hand. She makes a little bob and smiles uncertainly, trying to control her ungovernable feeling of being caught out.

But she has been caught out.

Jacob invites her to sit down beside him. They exchange rapid snippets of information, asking after the general state of health of their respective families. Jacob has come in from the country for a funeral. He also has Evensong at six o'clock and has promised to assist at Communion. On Monday, he will be going back out to Maria, who is quite well now after recovering from a lengthy cold. They are going off to the cottage on the island for the few days left of his holiday. What a summer it has been, though too little rain, particularly out there by the sea.

And Anna?

Well, the children are in Dalarna with their grandmother. The doctor has prescribed fresh forest air after the infections of the spring term. But they will be joining Anna and Henrik at the summer place in the archipelago the second week in August. All three have recovered and are well. Henrik is away at a seminar.

Yes, Jacob knows that—an ecumenical seminar at the Sigtuna Foundation. Henrik is well. It has been a bad spring for us all with all that rampant illness. His insomnia is not so bad, and he enjoys being by the sea. For her part, Anna is longing to see the children, but she doesn't want to leave Henrik on his own. He needs her presence.

And what is Anna doing here in Stockholm, Jacob suddenly asks, and she flushes, smiling at the same time. "I've been to the hairdresser's. A secret extravagance, you see. And last night I had dinner with the Hasselroths, nice people, my friends. I can never get Henrik to come with me. I don't really know why. But it's probably because they are friends of mine, not his. Tomorrow, I'm going up to Dalarna for a few days to stay with Mother and the children. Henrik will be alone for a week, but old Alma will be there to look after him, so that'll be all right. I want to be with Ma for a while, you see, Uncle Jacob. She's been so lonely since Ernst's death, and I . . ."

Anna turns her head away and runs her hand over her eyes, as if with impatience. "I can't quite be reconciled to my brother's dying so suddenly and horribly like that. It's months ago, but all the same. And Mama loved him. I don't think she has ever loved anyone else."

She hides her face with her hand. Jacob sits still, listening carefully. Then he turns toward her and looks at her. She at once takes down her hand. There's so

FILIP PAGOWSKI

much, one great tangle. "I'm sorry, Uncle Jacob. I'm not the crying kind. But there's so much."

She collects herself and blows her nose in a large handkerchief. "I must go home. Henrik may well phone at four o'clock. He starts worrying the moment I don't answer. If you'd like to come with me, I can give you a cup of coffee and something to eat."

He nods and pats Anna's arm. "That'd be good. Much better than an early dinner before Evensong. Come, let's go."

Anna and Henrik's home is on the first floor of the parish building, a corner apartment looking out over the billowing greenery of the churchyard and a narrow side street. Everything in it is covered or rolled up. The windows are slightly open to allow a thin draft in. The chandelier is shrouded in muslin, the extensive parquet floor bare, and all furniture and other objects concealed under white and yellowing dust sheets. But the grandfather clock in the corner is going and says a few minutes to four.

Anna has uncovered the blue velvet sofa and placed Uncle Jacob there, an elegant little table at his knee, on it the tea tray and open-faced sandwiches—cheese, sausage, and salt meat. She sits herself down in an armchair by the marble-topped drawing-room table, on the wall behind her a gilt-framed picture of the Virgin Mary and the Infant Jesus, an aging Joseph expressing restrained surprise, and some shepherds and angels just visible in the background. The picture, too, is covered with muslin.

Their quietly flowing conversation has ceased. Anna has turned to face the window, her hand moving over the marble surface. Jacob eats his sandwiches and lets the silence go on. "You don't mind if I smoke, do you?" he says, as if in parenthesis, taking out his pipe and tobacco pouch. She smiles quickly, then at once turns serious.

Hand gesture.

"Have you time, Uncle Jacob?"

"I have Evensong at six. Otherwise . . ."

"And after that?"

"All evening. As long as you like."

Silence.

"Perhaps this is wrong. I don't know."

"I've taken you through confirmation and I'm your spiritual adviser. You can say what you like. Or what you have to."

"Then I must."

Jacob leans forward and lights his pipe with elaborate care. Anna turns to him, the membranes of her eyes apparently about to burst. Then a deep breath. She looks at her hands, resting on the arms of the chair.

"I'm an unfaithful wife.

"I live with another man.

"I'm deceiving Henrik.

"I'm full of anguish.

"Not guilty conscience or anything like that.

"That'd be silly.

"But anguish.

"I no longer know what to do.

"Another man.

"He's ten—well, eleven years younger.

"He's reading theology. Is to be a priest.

"I can't break it off.

"I love him.

"For over a year.

"You know him, Uncle Jacob.

"It's Tomas.

"And then the children.

"And Henrik.

"Soon I won't be able to breathe."

Jacob nods. So she dares go on.

"Mama was against my marriage to Henrik. When we finally married, she changed her attitude and decided to help us in every way. That lasted only two years. Two years."

She falls silent, smiling mournfully. Jacob says nothing.

"Yes, it lasted two years. Then I realized, of course, that my mother had been right. We did not suit each other. Henrik surrounded me on all sides with his wounds. I was to be his mother and he would at last be allowed to be the child. My child. My *only* child. He always had to know where I was. He had to know what I was thinking. It was like a prison, an emotional prison. I can't describe it in any other way."

ANNA gets up and crosses the creaking floor with firm steps on her high heels, her clenched hands behind her back. It's important now not to give way to tears. Now she must say just what the situation is. No, not what it is. She knows nothing about that. She must say what occurs to her. She must say how she just might possibly think things are. This mysterious fiction that has afflicted her reality and is threatening her life. (So grave? That must be something of an exaggeration. Presumably not. One day, like poisonous, dammed-up water, the pain must break through the dams and pour into her body, attacking her nerves, her mind, heart, and loins. It will plunge her into lengthy torment and cause incurable damage to her body.)

"It was all so innocent and insidious. I had said to Tomas that he must come and see us during the summer. You know, don't you, Våroms is my parents' summer house, and it's in one of the most beautiful places in Dalarna. Henrik and I and the children were to spend the summer there. Mama planned to be off in the archipelago with her stepsons. I invited Tomas to come and stay over Midsummer. Henrik was going to be there, too, and Gertrud. Then Henrik couldn't come. He had to go to a conference. I thought of cancelling it, but Henrik thought Tomas should come anyhow. We joked and said that maybe Tomas and Gertrud would become a couple. The girl would make a very good wife for a priest. Well, Tomas came the day before Midsummer. Gertrud was already there. The maids were on holiday, and I had a good girl from the village as help. I was feeling free and happy, everything glowing and flourishing. After raining for ages, the weather had changed, and it was sunny every day. Well, yes, the way I talk. I can hear myself saying all kinds of things you really think quite unimportant."

She is standing in front of Jacob, her hands still behind her back, looking at him. The tears well up, suddenly and unexpectedly. "We played with the children, we picked wild strawberries, we had ham with new potatoes, and soured milk with ginger biscuits. In the evenings, we played the piano and sang. Gertrud has such a lovely voice. And Tomas, yes. He knows such a lot of music. On other days we went for long outings over on the other side of the river, up to the field in Bäsna and Grånäs. We were always just us three together—Gertrud, Tomas, and me. I was so pleased that . . . I was so pleased I had been able to . . . I was pleased, you see, Uncle Jacob. I was probably presumptuous, because I thought, I remember, I'm in love with this boy. I'm so in love that it's almost comical. I've no intention of being ashamed of falling in love. But I won't show it. I'll keep it to myself. Sometimes I left Tomas and Gertrud on their own. I didn't begrudge them each other. I actually *wanted* them to have each other. I, who had been so burdened, so weighed down—now I thought I could fly."

Anna makes a hasty gesture toward her hair, then sits down on the sofa beside Jacob and for a moment takes his great liver-spotted hand between hers, then gives it back.

"One of Tomas's last days at Våroms, I came down from my room to lay the table for dinner. The children were playing below the veranda, and Gertrud was in the hammock, writing letters. Tomas helped me put out the glasses and plates. Then he stopped at the end of the table. I was over by the green cupboard and just about to take the plates out for dessert, and then he suddenly says he's fond of me. That he has been 'fond of' me—well, he said, has 'loved' me—for two years. That he couldn't understand what life would be like now that he had to leave me. He also said that I mustn't be angry with him for saying it. Well, I don't actually know what he said. I sort of stopped listening. It was terrible and unreal, and I thought briefly and clearly, Now everything'll go wrong. Now everything's spoiled. How could he be such an idiot?"

Jacob glances at the grandfather clock and with some difficulty gets up from the sofa.

"I must go now, my dear Anna. You'll have to excuse me, but I want to be at church in good time. If you feel like continuing our time together after Evensong, I'll only be going home to take off my cassock and put on something more comfortable. Shall we say eight o'clock? Would that be all right?"

Anna thanks him rather faintly, and he pats her arm. On his way out into the hall, he says suddenly, "You could come with me to church. They say we won't be many souls there on a Sunday evening like this. It's true no one can hear what Arborelius is preaching, and that might possibly be an advantage. But Ehrling plays the organ beautifully, and the choir is to sing two of old Noren's motets. So there might be something for the soul after all."

He stands there thoughtfully for a while and then looks at her, almost sternly.

"If you'd like to take Communion, then do so, Anna. If you're living in severe torment, if you're hard-pressed, if you don't know what to do with yourself, it can be good to go to Communion and be given permission to lay your distress on God's heart."

"I know nothing about God's heart, Uncle Jacob."

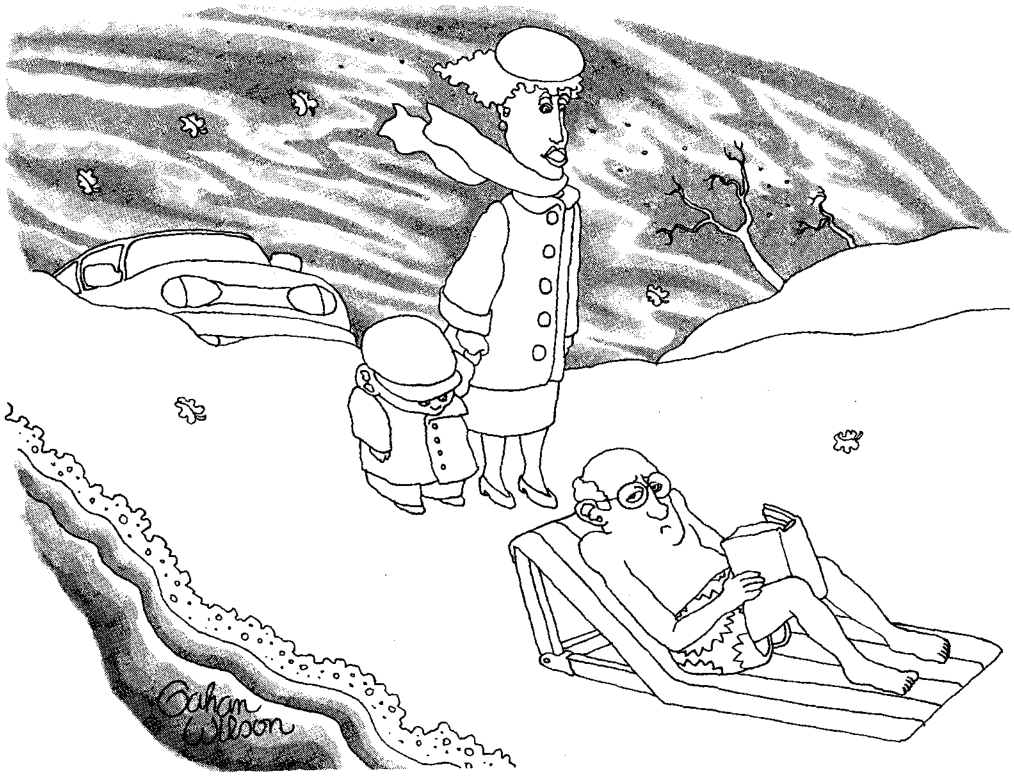
"You don't need to. But there's grace in the action itself. And perhaps that would relieve your suffering."

"I don't think I can."

"Do as you please. Anyhow, we'll see each other again at eight o'clock."

WHAT does she do when she has been left alone? It is half past five on a Sunday evening. It is still warm, the sun glowing above the church cupola. Regrets? Relief? Sorrow? A dizziness that neither speaks nor replies. A hectic, penetrating anxiety. Stop now. What am I doing? The anguish slips away and becomes flickering colors that evaporate and dissolve into floating shadows. She cannot distinguish Tomas's face, but she can see her mother quite clearly. Maybe she should phone Ma, who at this moment is sitting in the uncomfortable white chair by the window, with its resplendent geraniums and its view over the river, the fields, and the fading ridges. She is sure to be reading the Uppsala paper, sitting there small and erect, her glasses far down her nose, the sunlight coming diagonally from the right, through the plants in the window boxes, and shining on her pale skin with the laugh lines around her eyes and the wrinkle of wisdom above the bridge of her nose. She has not been wearing her apron, because it is Sunday, and her summer dress is of gray shantung, with broad white cuffs and hemstitched collar. A grandchild is on the floor—Nils, aged five, playing quietly with building blocks and some dolls the size of a little finger.

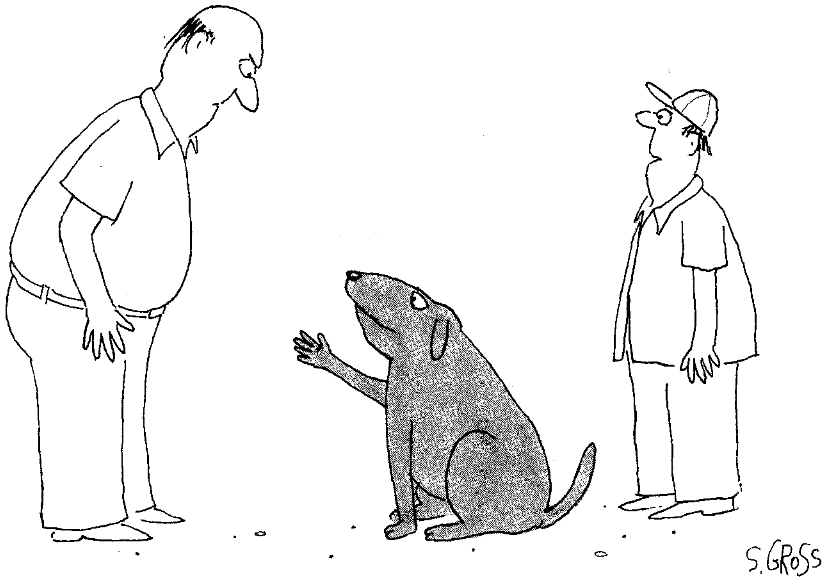
What if she tried to get hold of Tomas instead? Just to find out what mood he is in, not to tell him about confessions or press him to say anything consoling or meaningful. But I probably can't get hold of him. He is lodging with an elderly relative, and the telephone is on the wall in the hall, and he has also just had dinner at their shabby eating place with the two friends left of the bunch that usually eats together, the two who are staying on for the summer in Uppsala. And now he's sure to have gone to the botanical gardens to amble about down by the water-lily ponds, where it smells strongly of Chinese roses and still water. Or else he's sitting in the shade of the elms, reading some book for his exams. She quickly thinks about his hand resting on the page, and then she goes on thinking so that she is almost beside him. She stands with her head lowered, her finger to her lips as if requesting silence. No, not Tomas, not at the moment. Not later, either; perhaps never. Confession presumably entails something shattering and final.



*"It's time for us to go back to Sixty-fifth and Third, Richard."*

Anyhow, something mysterious, which she does not dare include in her vision. There are short moments that muscle into life when she grasps the content, the exact content, of her situation. Then she reaches out and grips the back of a chair and for a moment is utterly aware of the chill emanating from the sculptured white wood.

At the same far-reaching moment, she sees herself as an image—an image of Anna and Tomas. They are naked and sweaty. She is lying on her back in his arms, with both hands round his head, pressing his forehead to her. She parts her legs and opens, pressing her back against the coarse bedspread. Dusk has fallen in the bare room, the glowing embers of the fire rustling in the tiled stove, listless snowflakes outlined against the dark branches in the park. The moment beyond fear. The moment is as unfathomable as death. Now, at this moment, as she touches the sculptured back of the chair, she realizes—indeed, she feels with the essence of her emotions—the sharpness of sensations, the twilight, the confusion of sweaty bodies, the smell of stale tobacco smoke, the rough surface of the bedspread, the untamed moment still trembling in her nerves. The frightened, expressionless face of the boy, his eyes closed and his lips pressed together. He whimpers slightly. He turns his head aside, his hand resting against her long hair flowing over the stiffly soiled pillow with its sharp hemstitching. In that brief moment, her emotions and her reason grasp the irretrievable cruelty of their meeting of love. And now, at this very moment, she sees quite clearly that she has no remorse. She blames no one, neither herself nor anyone else. She involves neither God nor faith in her dark confusion. She realizes she will never go deeper down into herself. She is falling headlong into innermost spaces, a raging light that dazzles and banishes the gentle twilight. Anna would often say she wanted to see the truth. She imagined she longed for the truth, that she desired it; it became almost an infatuation. Perhaps it was like seeing the face of God. She wanted to appoint herself an apostle of the truth. With such remarks she earned a certain respect. Occasionally, she regretted her clever corrections. She would whisper silently to herself, What kind of truth am I talking about? And then she was ashamed (but only a little) of her fleeting insight.



*"He wants you to shake hands."*

• •

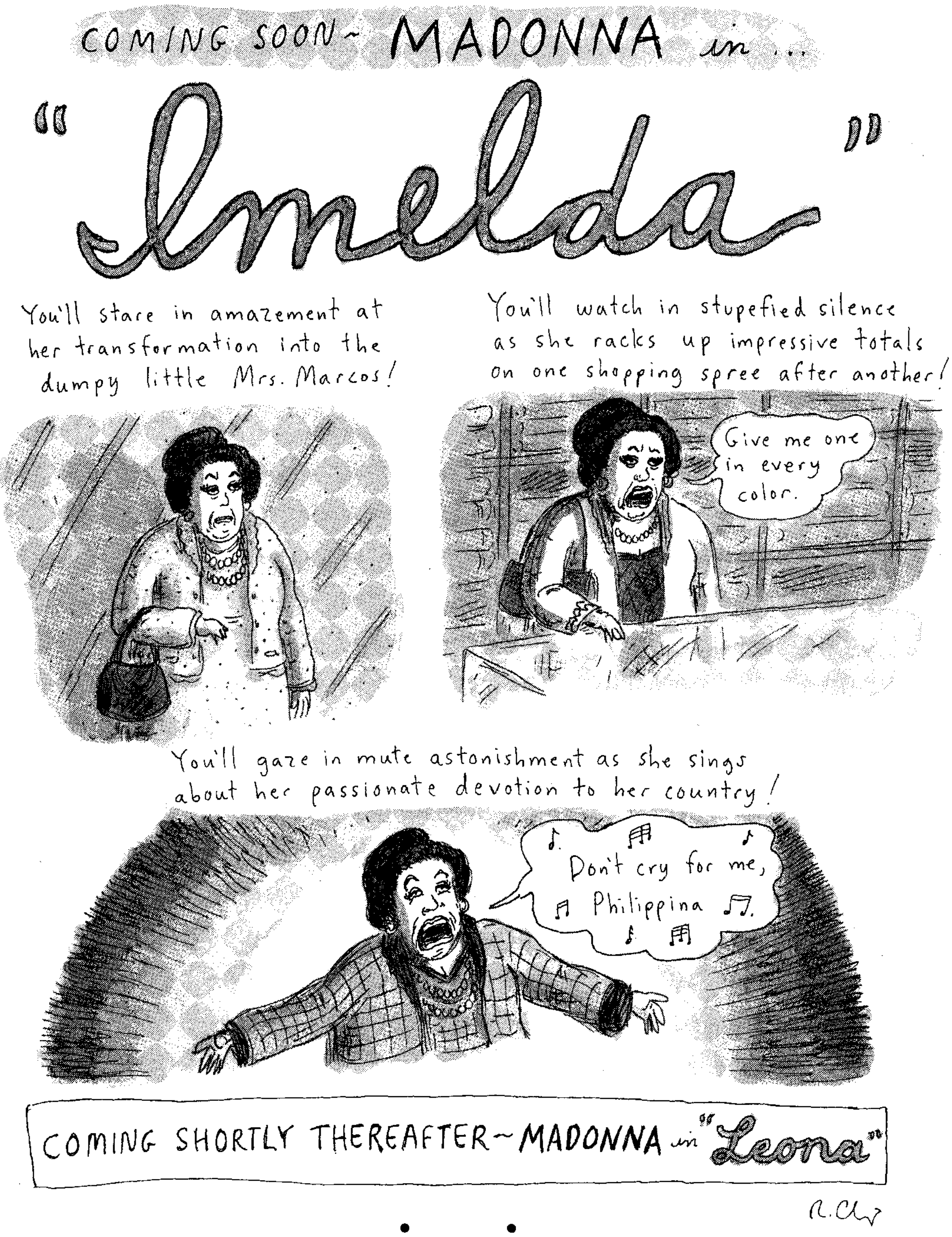
The clock strikes six, and the summoning church bell clangs over sun-emptied streets. Anna pulls herself together; the overwhelming moment has evaporated. She turns again into the room, thus leaving the chair. "Now, then, Anna," she says aloud to herself. "You're not to phone Ma, or Tomas. But you might as well make your way down to church and listen to the music. That'll do you good."

She takes the lovely summer hat off the rack and looks in the dim hall mirror. She examines herself with the cool objectivity of an actress. In her undeniable despair, this provides a brief but intense enjoyment. She thrusts her arms into the jacket sleeves and straightens out the lacy patterns at the top of her blouse. Gloves, handbag, prayer book. And goes. Down the stairs, across the street, onto the stone-laid path of the churchyard, rapid steps toward the great doorway. The prelude to the first hymn is being intoned, few souls in the green pews. The sunlight is hurling horizontal spears through the huge dark-blue cupola with its constellations. The church is cold after the fragrant warmth of the churchyard. It smells of moldy cellars, dead flowers, and old timber. The altar candles flicker uncertainly beneath the high picture of the Cross: the dress of the Holy Mother glows dimly red in the horrible scenery; the weeping sinner is clutching the foot of the Cross; the thunderclouds darken behind the still illuminated Jerusalem.

Anna sinks down into the pew and smiles weakly at Mrs. Arborelius, sitting on the aisle beside a large, red-haired daughter in a sailor suit, a sailor hat on her straggly curls.

The service flows on in its practiced way. The Reverend Arborelius speaks, his deep bass voice thundering in the arch of the temple and bouncing off the tombs in the stone floor. The choir sings the mildly harsh motets, both from the Psalms: "Lead me in the way everlasting" and "And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."

ANNA'S spacious and well-equipped kitchen faces the courtyard and its elms, walls, and storage sheds. A faded red summer curtain billows at the open window. The larder is so large it holds an old-fashioned refrigerator, still in use. Along the wall is a folding kitchen table with blue painted wooden chairs around it; shelves on the walls are full of copper pans and disparate ornamental objects. The countertops by the sink are of marble, long and low, spacious cupboards underneath them. In the corner next to the protruding flue is a sturdy, ingenious 1909 woodstove containing two baking ovens and a gleaming copper hot-water tank. The stove rings are numerous and the openings above the fire four in number. Beside and at right angles to the woodstove is a two-burner gas stove. The floor


COMING SOON~ MADONNA in ...
"Imelda"
You'll stare in amazement at her transformation into the dumpy little Mrs. Marcos!
You'll watch in stupefied silence as she racks up impressive totals on one shopping spree after another!
Give me one in every color.
You'll gaze in mute astonishment as she sings about her passionate devotion to her country!
Don't cry for me, Philippina
COMING SHORTLY THEREAFTER~MADONNA in "Leona"

is covered with linoleum, newly varnished for the summer, only partly covered by home-woven rag rugs. Two shoemaker's lamps hang high up in the ceiling, when in use throwing out a pleasing yellow light. A short flight of stairs in the wall opposite the window goes down into a maid's room.

Smells of summer come from the courtyard and of varnish from the linoleum.

The parish priest is sitting on a wooden chair at the kitchen table, filling his pipe. It is eight o'clock and still light, the sun just reaching the roof and chimneys of the apartment house opposite. A gramophone is being played by an open window. Otherwise it is all quite still.

Jacob fills his pipe from his tobacco pouch. The tip of his forefinger is yellow with nicotine and scarred from small burns. He has taken off his clerical garb and put on crumpled gray flannel trousers and a long hand-knitted cardigan. His dog collar has been replaced by a more comfortable restriction. The neatly knotted tie is dark blue. His shirt is slightly shabby and has a button missing, the cuffs around strong, hairy wrists sticking out of the cardigan sleeves.

The reason Jacob is sitting in the kitchen is the modest supper Anna has improvised—onion-and-tomato omelette, small sausages, and new potatoes. She pours a glass of schnapps for each of them, and they share a bottle of chilled Pilsner. Jacob praises her swift initiative and drinks her health. She is standing beside him at the table.

So, in this way, the tragedy pauses. Jacob and Anna allow themselves to eat, only making small talk.

Anna has taken off her apron. After pouring the coffee, she has sat down on the stool by the sink, facing the window. Jacob stirs his coffee, takes three lumps of sugar, hesitates, then takes a fourth.

"Most people think Luther abolished confession. But he didn't. He prescribed what he called 'private conversation.' But he didn't know much about human beings, that splendid reformer. Face to face in broad daylight is difficult. So it's better done in the semi-darkness of the confessional, the mumbling voices, the smell of incense."

Jacob looks at his quietly reeking pipe and smiles thoughtfully. "I can no longer see you," he says then. "The evening light from the window obliterates your face. If you like, Anna dear, we can go on talking. If not, we can just go on sitting here together, feeling affection. That's also very purposeful."

But Anna really does want to talk.

"My childhood was incredibly harmonious—and fun. I sometimes wonder whether that was so entirely useful. Maybe you're given wrong ideas. And I've probably been naïve. Only in that I married Henrik. I could see how damaged he was, but in my boundless self-confidence I thought I was destined to save him. Can you imagine anything stupider? Mama warned me. Warned me and tried to stop me, but I was stubborn. Of course, I loved him in a childish and arrogant way. But I knew nothing. Neither about him nor about myself. In two years, Uncle Jacob, in two short years, we'd thrown away our capital of love. One night I ran away from Forsboda to Uppsala. I got there early in the morning and wept and begged my mother to help me. She was attentive and kindly, but unyielding. The next morning I was made to take the train back to my marriage. It was insane."

Anna laughs joylessly and turns to the window, the sunlight gone now, a reddish light coloring the dirty yellow façades. Under the great trees, two small boys are busy with a rickety bicycle. A tall woman in a crumpled grayish-blue dress opens a window and leans out. Other female figures can just be seen inside the apartment, chatter and laughter and careless piano music pouring out over the courtyard.

"No," says Anna, suddenly and decisively. "I couldn't do what you recommend, Uncle Jacob. I did want to go to Communion, but I stopped myself."

They leave the kitchen. "No, no, I'll clear away later. Let's go into the library, so that you can sit in a comfortable armchair and smoke your evening cigar. Henrik has been given a whole box by Gustavsson, a businessman, in gratitude for something—I don't know what, though I think because Henrik went to see his old mother at the Erika Foundation."

She takes Jacob's arm and they walk through the darkening rooms, where the shrouded furniture glows like Arctic formations. The library is a square room with two windows facing the churchyard and Storgatan, the walls lined with bookcases. A small home altar is set into the wall between the bookcases, on it the open family Bible. Above the Bible is a two-foot-tall wooden crucifix portraying "The Triumphant Saviour." An oil painting, dark and Dutch, hangs above the big leather sofa, an ingenious chamber organ is at right angles to the sofa, and there are comfortable, low leather armchairs below the window. A massive library table extends along the middle of the floor.

"Henrik hardly ever smokes cigars, but he maintains these are excellent."

Anna has opened the silver cigar box and taken out a cigar. She puts it to her ear and rolls it back and forth, then nods approvingly.

"Papa was an enthusiastic cigar smoker. Fine cigars and fine railway engines were his passions (possibly Mama, too, but that is less certain). I loved sitting on his lap when he was smoking. So he taught me very early on to treat cigars with care and respect."

She opens up a gilded knife with an ivory handle and snips the chosen cigar, then hands it to Jacob, lights a long match, and holds it out for him. There is a moment of violent puffing. Then Jacob looks at his cigar with appreciation.

Anna leans against the high wooden armchair at the library table, her arms resting on its back as she looks out the window.

"It was like this, if you want to hear, Uncle Jacob. Tomas and I were alone in his wretched lodgings in Uppsala. It was an icy-cold January day, dusk already falling. I had told him I had to go back to Stockholm, and it would be a long time before we could meet again. He stood quite still, his hands on my shoulders. I had already put my coat on. I was leaving. It was at that moment I chose."

"You chose?" Emphasis on both words.

"I took off my coat. I took off my dress. I sat down on a chair and took off my winter boots and my petticoat and

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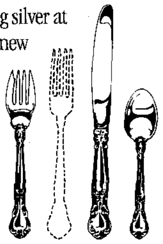

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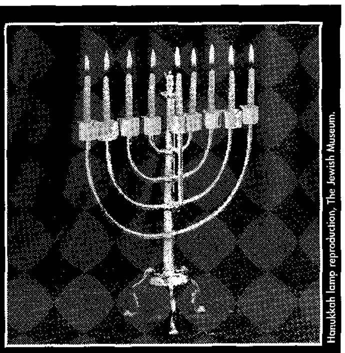

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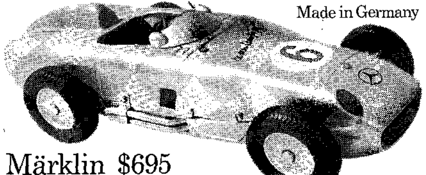

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bodice and stockings. I took out my hairpins. In the end I was sitting there on the chair in nothing but my shift. I hadn't looked at Tomas all the time I'd been undressing. Then I looked at him. He was standing over by his worktable. Then he shook his head and said, 'No, no, no, not this.' He was that precise, Uncle Jacob. But I no longer had any choice. For me, there was no possibility of turning back. Yes, I know it sounds dramatic, but I can't find any other words for it. So I took his hand and pulled him toward me. He fell to his knees and I had his head in my hands and his forehead against my breast. That's what it was like. Does it *upset you that I tell you all these details,* Uncle Jacob?"

"You must decide that for yourself."

"I took him to me, you see, Uncle Jacob. And then I had to console him."

She suddenly laughs and strikes the back of the chair with her clenched fist.

"He was inconsolable. He insisted that he had betrayed me and Henrik, who was his best friend. He thought he had been weak and behaved appallingly. He said that God would never forgive him for this. He was like a terrified child. Then we started kissing again, and he was as eager as I was. Nothing . . . nothing. No. Nothing."

She runs her hand across her forehead as if there were a cobweb there to wipe away.

"I have thought about regrets. But I have no regrets. I have thought about sin, but that becomes just a word. I have put prohibitions like a high wall between him and me. But at the very slightest chance of seeing him I instantly knock down that wall. I think about Henrik, but Henrik's face is unclear. I hear what he says . . . I mean, I hear his voice. But he's not really real. I think that I ought to . . . I know that I ought to . . . no, that's probably not true. And the children. I have become kinder toward Henrik, too. Things have been better between us. . . . Things are better in every way. I can be tender and loving toward him, and he is pleased and not so irritable and anguished. Everything has become better since I gave myself permission to love Tomas. He, too, is at peace and no longer has his attacks of 'awareness of sin,' as he calls it. We can't see each other all that often, but whenever I am in Uppsala to see my mother we meet."

She has talked a great deal and for a long time. No anguish. No regrets or

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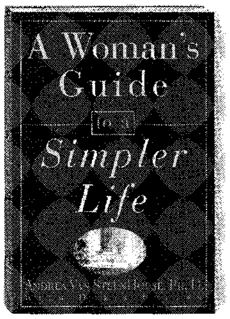

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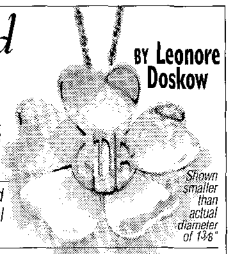

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shyness. She stands by the chair with her arms on the back, looking out into the summer dusk over the dark treetops in the churchyard.

"If everything is as marvellous as you've just told me, why did you start crying before?"

"You caught me out, Uncle Jacob. I had just been with Tomas in a room in a boarding house, almost all afternoon. I went to the train with Henrik. Then I went straight to Tomas. We hadn't seen each other for over a month . . . six weeks, I think. It was so upsetting—not sorrowful but upsetting. I didn't see you sitting there in the shade. And then you called my name, and I was so comically frightened, as if caught out . . . yes, caught out. And as we sat there talking so pleasantly I had a feeling . . ."

Silence. Yet another silence. Anna is shaping words that are not spoken.

"I think I can guess what you were feeling."

"Of course you can't!" says Anna in annoyance. "If I'm to be honest, I was frightened."

"Frightened of me?"

"It was like a pillar, black and gleaming, reaching right up to the sky. It was a momentary feeling, which passed in a second. Then we were sitting there talking. And it was just pleasant, not in the least peculiar."

"Then you started crying."

"Yes. You see, I realized all that joy was to be taken from me, leaving room for so much suffering and . . . unfathomable misery. It was a brief insight—just like that pillar—and it had gone in a few seconds, and I heard my own voice telling you about . . . Then, then the tears came. And I couldn't . . ."

"You could've blamed anything."

"I was looking at your big hand, Uncle Jacob. And I thought, If God has a hand—which I don't believe, but if God has a hand—then it looks like yours. Then I thought about the hymn: 'Last, my Lord, I Thee pray, take my hand in Thine so Thou . . .' "

For a brief moment, she is overwhelmed by a rush of pain. She goes around the library table and sits down on the uncomfortable monk's chair at the organ. Nothing is said for quite a long time—which is noted here to assist anyone interested in the way a conversation of this kind moves and breathes.

"From all that you've just told me, I can understand that you really *did* want

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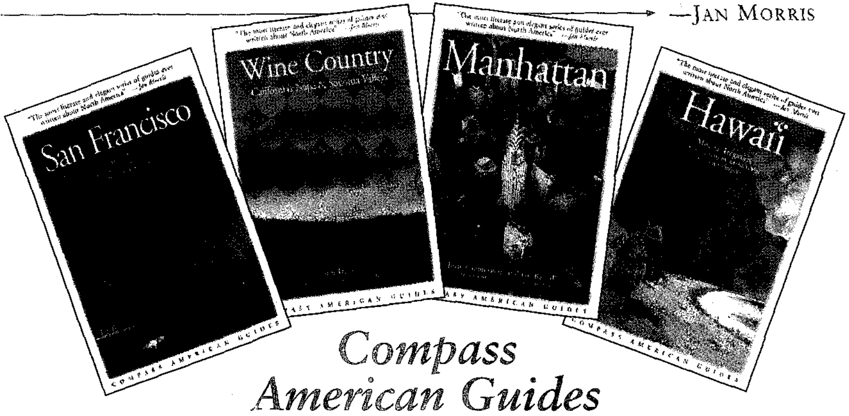

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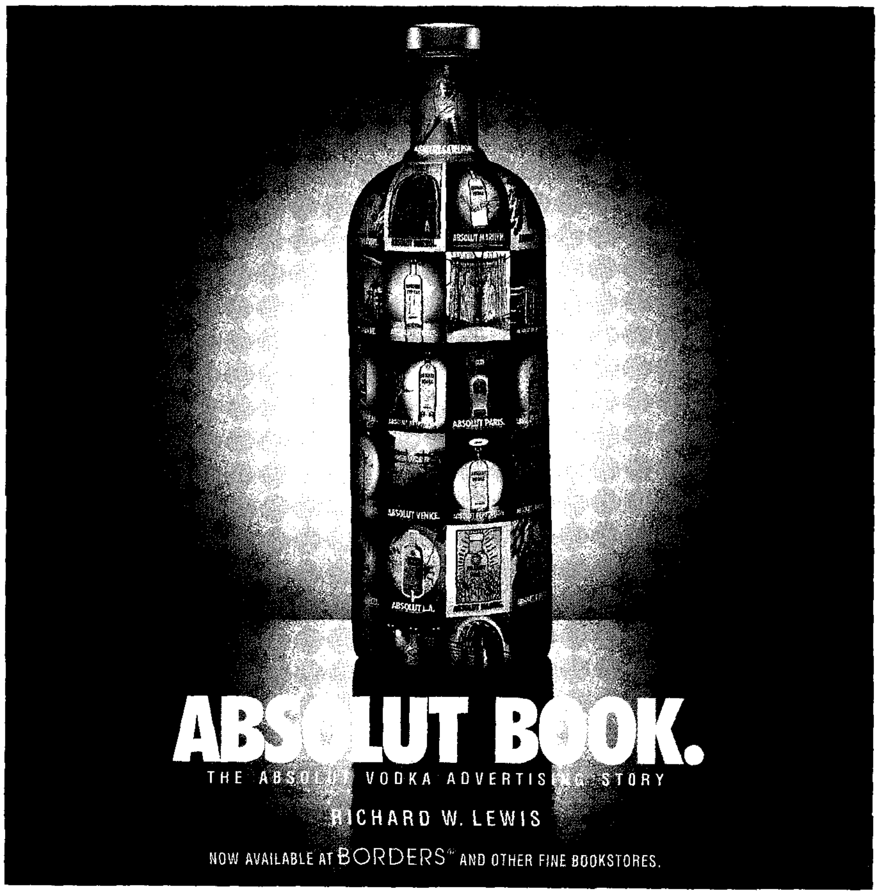

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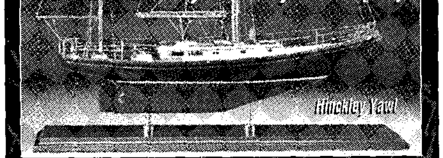

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to communicate with me, although you thought you couldn't."

"Yes, I suppose that's it," says Anna in the distinct voice of a little girl. "Isn't that always so? A very great joy, a joy so great it's unfathomable . . . In its turn it summons up every kind of darkness, every possible torment and terror. . . . I was made to taste the pain waiting behind the joy, I suppose. If it is *not* God who has given me Tomas, then I'm a long way from God, and that's good. I know you're thinking I'm being unacceptably blasphemous."

"It's not for you to decide what I think! I remember when you came to confirmation classes. You'd always done your homework, and when we had our discussions you brought up pertinent questions. I also saw you were a friend to your classmates. I knew you came from a loving home. I knew both your mother and your father, your mother best of all. I probably wondered what kind of life lay ahead of you."

Jacob leans forward, grasping the dying cigar between his thumb and forefinger. He lights it, puffs out smoke, the aroma spreading in the twilight. Anna bows her head and looks at her open palm. Then she makes a little gesture of restrained impatience.

"All that kindly security. Even at school . . . I mean, the nursing school. I saw all that misery—especially the children. But that didn't touch my security. And all those years with Henrik—twelve years—difficult and hardworking years, not at all as I had imagined. But the security was there. Mama and Papa. My brother. The house on Trädgårdsgatan. Everything was there all the time. I lived a long way inside that security."

Silence. Yet another silence.

"Do you want me to go, Anna?"

"No. I'd like you to stay a little while longer. But I don't think I've anything more to say."

"And, Anna, why have you told me, *really*?"

"If I dare think about it . . .

"If I just think about the smallest thing of all . . .

"Then I see that we are living under threat.

"That I'm becoming more and more restricted.

"The children and Henrik and Tomas and I . . .

"We are moving close to a catastrophe.

"A life catastrophe.

"Either I do nothing at all . . . but then I can . . . No, that's impossible. Is there really any way out? And the next question—and it frightens me most of all—do I really *want* a way out? Then I immediately think about the children, and it's so difficult. I push those thoughts away—yes, they're nearly unendurable. Now I'm crying a little, and that's not just selfishness, but it hurts damnably. Say what you like about Henrik, but he's good to the children. Maybe too strict, especially with the boys, but he's loving and tenderhearted with them. . . . Then I would be taking the children from him. That'd be unjust. No, it's a timed, infernal machine, ticking away, and sometimes I can hear it very clearly. And I'm frightened. . . . At the same time, I'm filled with longing."

She suddenly looks Jacob straight in the eye and smiles almost cheerfully. "So *that's* it, Uncle Jacob. I haven't told a single person about all this. I think a few have some idea. Gertrud, perhaps—she's seen Tomas and me together. And Märta; she took me aside one day and warned me about one thing and another. We never spelled it out. Märta's on the other side of the world now, a missionary and doctor. Gertrud was probably just as much in love with Tomas, but she's never said anything. So now you know, Uncle Jacob. I don't really know what I'd hoped for. Maybe that you'd give me some good advice, a solution. Or forgiveness of my sins."

Jacob smokes his cigar. It's almost finished. He observes the glow flickering inside the thin tobacco leaf.

"If you want my compassion, I can tell you that it lies deep down. If you want my absolution, then you may not have it, as I don't think you feel any remorse whatsoever. If, on the other hand, you want my advice, I could say one or two things, presuming that you'll take me seriously. By that I mean you should follow my instructions. But you have to believe that I am speaking to you from the best of my judgment."

"I understand."

"Everything I'm going to say to you will make you rebel. You'll be miserable and angry and rebellious."

"Maybe I'll be grateful."

"I doubt it. First of all—you must, unconditionally, break off all liaison with your friend. Even if you yourself are experiencing profound and rich emotional satisfaction, you must put an end to the relationship. Tomas is committing a great crime. It could damage him for life. And if his lapse becomes known, his future will be even further jeopardized, not to say made impossible. You say you love him, and I believe you. To be loved by a person like you is a priceless gift. I mean, I have *not* said you should stop loving him, which would be a strange demand. What I'm telling you is that you are to cut off all connections, and I mean *all*. In that way, you would show him your love."

Anna is looking steadily at him. The street lights have now gone on and are casting reflections on the ceiling, so they can distinguish each other's features. Jacob is perhaps waiting for Anna

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to say something, but she stays silent.

"You must also tell Henrik everything."

"I can't do that."

"You must."

"No, no, I can't. Anything, but not tell him."

"You must."

"What purpose would that serve? No, it's impossible."

"The truth, Anna! You're entangled in a skein of lies. The longer you live in that tangle, the more wretched your life will be."

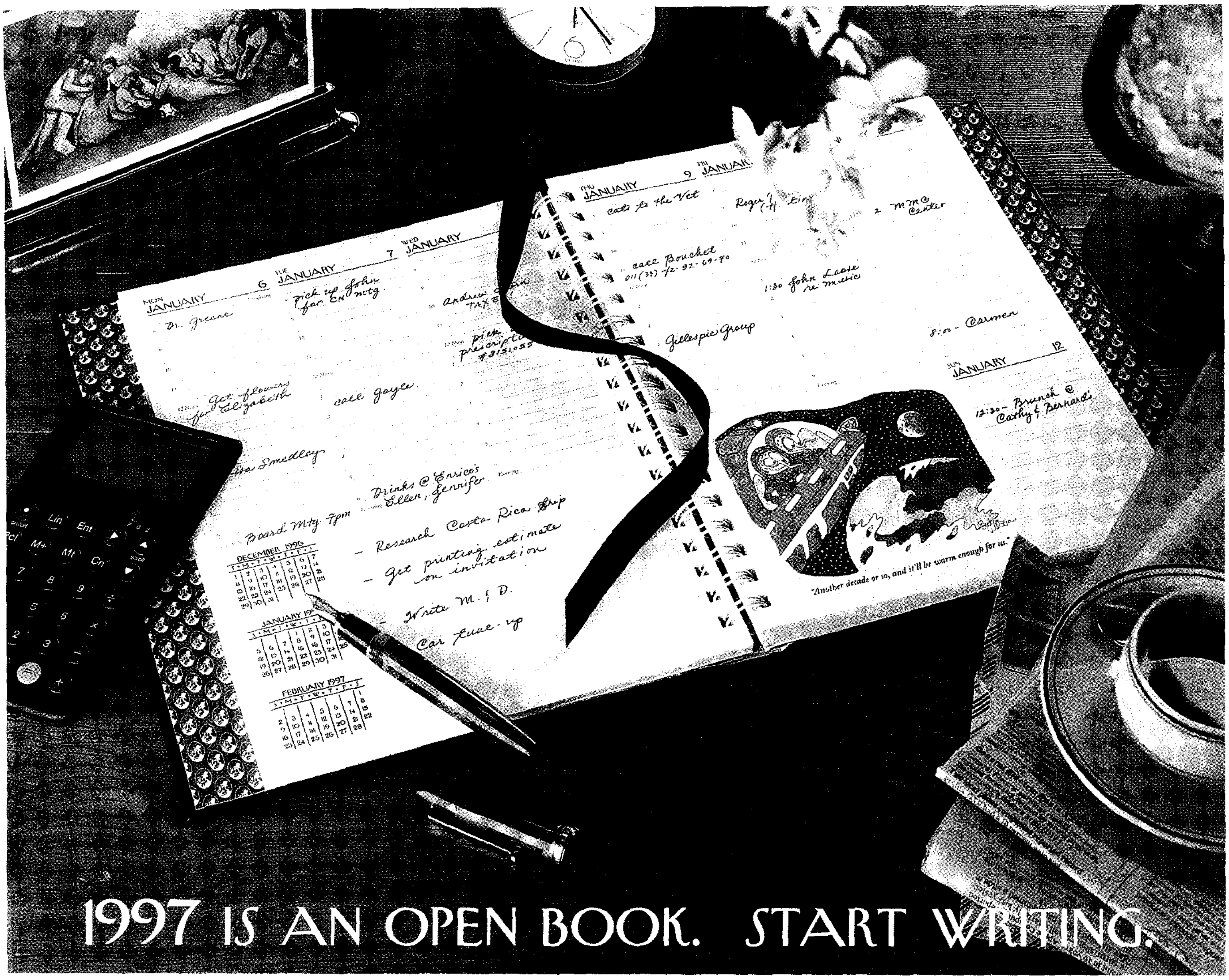
"Uncle Jacob! Henrik is a person who can scarcely cope with the strains everyday life puts in his way. He is weak and full of anxieties. His workload is immense. The truth would crush him. We have a fairly bad marriage, wretched in many ways, both spiritually and physically. But we have a kind of considerate comradeship, which binds us together. And it has helped us through twelve years. Comradeship and the children. If I drag in the truth, all hell would descend on us. No, Uncle Jacob, no, no."

"Don't you see, your suppression of the truth is profoundly selfish. There is, I have to tell you, a possibility that through the truth Henrik might mature to a better life."

"A better life! Forgive me, but Henrik is not that sort of person. He evades whenever he can evade things. He runs away whenever there is a chance to run away. If he is for one single moment at a loss, he becomes furiously angry or ill. He'd go under. *That's* the truth. I know he's a good priest. He's a conscientious spiritual adviser and has helped a great many people. But inside all that he is a lamentable, terrified wretch. I *can't* tell the truth. Do you *know* what things are like for us? I mean, what I called our intimate life? Sometimes I want to howl with disgust and humiliation. But it's possible to live from day to day, and that's the main thing. I can't tell Henrik about my physical life. I can't even work out how he would react. . . . He would perhaps . . . And the guilt . . . that guilt . . ."

"You must understand that I do understand. Nonetheless, the *truth* is the only possibility. You must forestall a humiliating disclosure."

"And who will help me when all hell breaks loose? Will I be able to turn to God? Or perhaps even to you, Uncle Jacob? Or to my mother? What do I say if Henrik throws me out onto the street? Shall I go to Tomas"—she laughs a little—"and say, 'Now, you poor thing, now you'll have to look after me and my children'? No! I will never tell the truth



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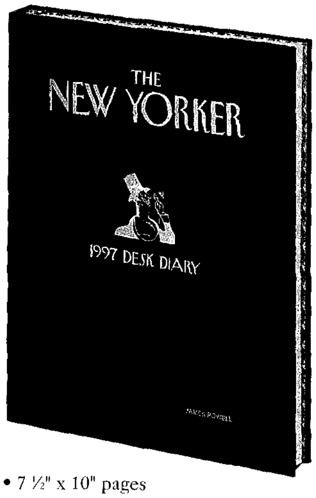

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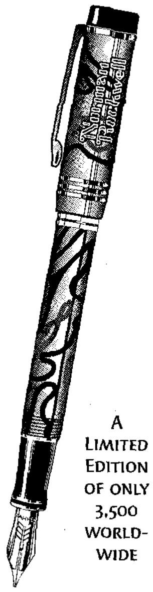

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you're demanding. I don't believe in that sort of honesty. I purchase my daily life with lies and betrayal. It's worth it. I shall bear my guilt all by myself, and I have no intention of asking anyone for help. Neither God nor you, Uncle Jacob."

"You talk of guilt as if you had a grasp of what *real* guilt entails. You don't know that. It's possible my words hurt and wound you. It's possible that you'll have to expose yourself and yours to trials. But if you have chosen the truth, you will become strong."

Anna smiles inwardly. "Yes," she says. "Yes, yes. Naturally. If you go the way of truth, you become strong. If you choose the truth, you solve insoluble problems."

"I must go now, Anna. I understand why you distance yourself. Nor do I demand that you should think as I do. I can't even remember whether you asked my advice. I have simply said what occurred to me."

"Is it so strange that I defend myself?"

"Be angry, by all means. After all, I'm talking to you from my well-ordered reality. My own crises and shortcomings are scarcely relevant at this particular moment. So be angry, please do. But think about it. You are a wise young person. I imagine that what I have said has existed in your mind for quite a long time. As clear realities."

"And so I know—"

"Abandon for a moment your preconceived idea of Henrik's possibilities."

"Thank you for your solicitude, Uncle Jacob."

"I shall include you in my evening prayers."

She lowers her head. They stop and stand still in the spacious hall, his hand on the door handle.

"Turn on the light so that I can see your face."

She turns the switch. A sleepy pair of lights go on in the brass brackets at both sides of the door.

"Look me in the eye. So. You're angry."

"No."

"Yes, you are. You're angry and disappointed. But what did you expect?"

"I don't know. I just wanted . . ."

"We act out many roles. Some because it's fun, some because others want us to act out those roles. Mostly because we want to protect ourselves."

"Yes, I think so."

"Then, imperceptibly, I lose what is *not* a role. When I keep on living, I get away from what is . . . myself, or whatever it's called."

"Then I can say right now that, at this very moment, I am *at last* 'me.' Life with Henrik took me further and further into what you call 'roles.' "

She looks anxiously, pleadingly, at Jacob. He doesn't meet her gaze, but instead gives her cheek a quick caress and shakes his head.

"I remember what you said that evening before your confirmation: 'I pray to God that I shall be of use. I'm tremendously strong.' Do you remember?"

"Yes, I do. I know. It was childish. But I *was* childish, after all."

"God has heard your prayer now."

"No."

"Don't you believe God concerns himself with your misery?"

"No."

"Don't you believe any longer?"

"No."

"Don't you say your prayers?"

"No."

"What does Tomas say?"

"He says that my 'turning away,' as he calls it, frightens him. Do you believe in God, Uncle Jacob? A Father in Heaven? A God of love? A God with hands and heart and watchful eyes?"

"All that is unimportant to me."

"Unimportant? How can the form of God be unimportant?"

"Don't say that word 'God.' Say the Holy One. The Sanctity of Man. Everything else is attribute, disguise, manifestations, tricks, desperation, ritual, cries of despair in the darkness and the silence. You can never calculate or capture the Sanctity of Man. At the same time, it's something to hold on to, something quite concrete. Unto Death. What happens thereafter is hidden. But one thing is sure: we are surrounded by events we do not grasp with our senses but that constantly influence us. Only the poets, musicians, and saints have given us mirrors of the Unfathomable. They have seen, known, understood. Not wholly, but in fragments. It is consoling to me to think about the Sanctity of Man and the mysterious Immensities surrounding us. What I am saying to you now is not a metaphor, for it is reality. Inscribed in the Sanctity of Man is the Truth. No one can commit violence against the Truth without going wrong. Without doing harm."

They have sat down on chairs beside the hall door. The lights from the wall brackets officiate sleepily. It is dark beyond the open window of the dining room. A lone song thrush concealed in the foliage heralds the as yet invisible dawn. ♦

(*Translated, from the Swedish, by Joan Tate.*)

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## A CRITIC AT LARGE

# THE STRONG WOMAN

*What was Mae West really fighting for?*

BY CLAUDIA ROTH PIERPONT

BECAUSE there were no available acting roles for a woman who drove men wild and enjoyed them in bed by the dozen and gave as good as she got and didn't want to marry and never suffered for any of it, Mae West had to become a writer before she could be a movie star. She began her literary career with a sketch for a vaudeville act in 1913, when she was twenty and her fame still rested largely on her ability to perform a well-advertised "muscle dance in a sitting position." By the time her first successful theatrical opus, entitled "Sex," got her arrested in New York, in 1927, she'd been honing her playwriting skills alongside her nonpareil shimmy and cooch for over a decade. She was still, however, a work in progress: a lowdown way to move in search of a philosophy, or maybe it was the other way around. By her movies of the thirties—several of which she wrote as well as starred in—style and content are so tightly joined that the comedy seems but a natural consequence of her remarkable bearing and physique: languorous yet corseted in armor, solid yet succulent, minutely activated with audible whirrings and purrings yet hugely, defiantly immobile. In an age of high kicks, high speeds, and easy smashups, Mae West was a woman structurally engineered to stand firmly on her own two feet.

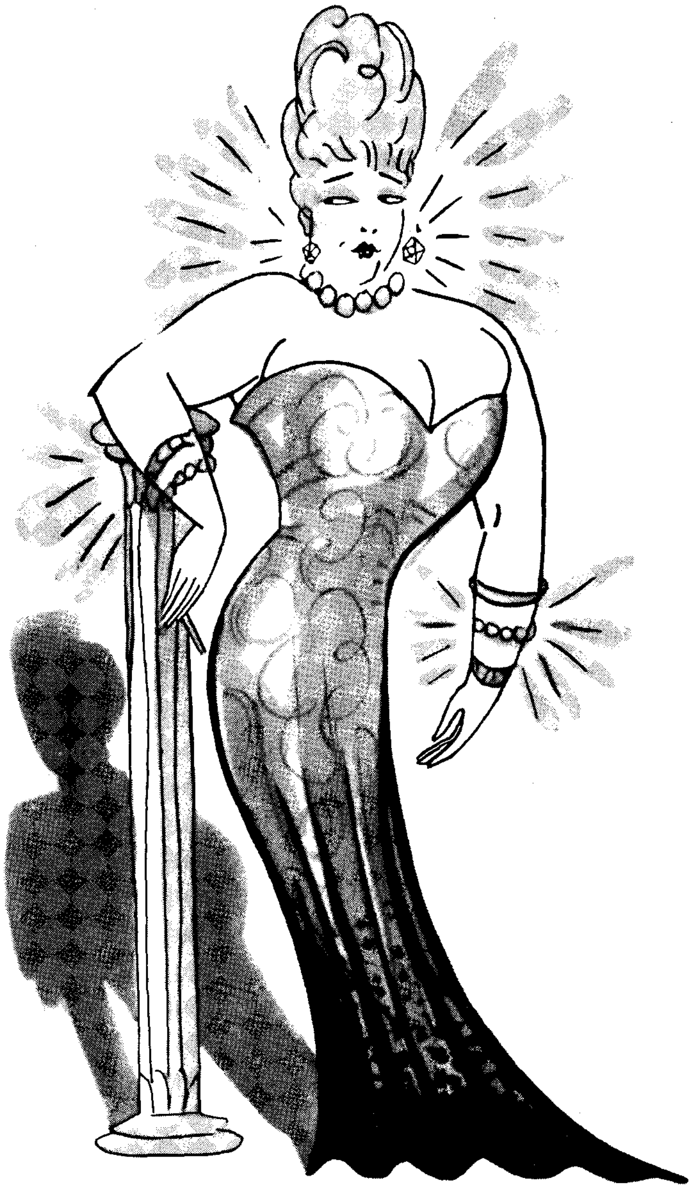
A new wave of interest in West as a kind of precocious modernist has resulted in a number of books concerned with her formidable feminism, her games with what she would never have wished to call "gender," and her enduring status in the American pop pantheon. These largely academic studies differ in focus, but not in basic biographical content, from the old picture-book stories of West's career. All accounts agree that her breakthrough creation was the Gay Nineties saloon singer Diamond Lil. The role brought her to sudden, stunning respectability when her play of that name opened on Broadway, in 1928. Overnight, the woman who had been dismissed as too vulgar for big-time vaudeville and jailed for violating public morals was transformed into America's leading actress-playwright, "more admired by her public than is Jane Cowl, Lynn Fontanne, Helen Hayes or Eva Le Gallienne," according to the *Herald Tribune*. The play's Bowery-bar setting made for some thrilling intellectual slumming, and West's one-hip-at-a-time portrayal of an implacably good-natured quasi prostitute overfond of her diamonds and her work was hailed as a theatrical archetype comparable to Harlequin or Pierrot, a portrait as grandly abstract as Bernhardt's Tosca. We know that West had finally found her distinctive self—as distinctive as Chaplin's Tramp or Groucho's Groucho—because Mae West imitators were already finding work.

Still, Hollywood was afraid to touch her. It was only after West awakened the dead in her scenes in an otherwise lifeless George Raft movie, in 1932, that Paramount agreed to take a chance on "Diamond Lil." Studio censors tore through the play, eliminating a little subplot about white slavery, a homosexual characterization, and such provocative lines as "the last guy she had." Their goal was not so much to eliminate sex as to erase all signs that the leading lady derived either pleasure or money from the experience. After months of haggling, the red-inked script was finally shot in eighteen days. The project was retitled "She Done Him Wrong" and the heroine's name changed to Lady Lou—to sidestep the notoriety of West's loot-bedecked Lil and to suggest her morally and socially elevated condition.

In spite of all the studio's efforts to clean up West's act, "She Done Him Wrong" was a huge box-office hit. Enormous crowds, late-night screenings, return engagements: this was the most emphatic response to any movie since "The Birth of a Nation." Mae West was not just the biggest star of 1933. She was a national fixation, and—with her two-handled curves, her speakeasy wisdom—the first authentic American folk heroine since Betsy Ross. ("And all *she* ever made was a flag.")

It's hard for anyone watching "She Done Him Wrong" today to believe that West was ever really considered either dangerous or desirable. Many viewers point to the fact that she was almost forty when she came to the screen (if admitting to twenty-nine). But West had never traded on conventional beauty. An early notice, when she was just eighteen, refers to her simply as "one of the many freak persons of the vaudeville stage." (She appeared on a circuit that also proudly billed the Half Woman and Venus on Wheels.) Generally, she veered between blunt sexual display—especially when she was trying to be serious, in which case reviewers consistently found her crude and fat—and a far more successful comic raunchiness based in burlesque. Sex was her subject, not her effect. And it was what she had to say about sex that was genuinely dangerous. As West's admirer and fellow-aphorist George Bernard Shaw once observed, "If you tell people the truth, make them laugh or they'll kill you." It required all her accumulated veils of wit and rouge—and about thirty years of stage experience, starting at age seven—to pull it off.

MAE WEST, an ambitious woman, began life as an ambitious woman's daughter. Matilda (Tillie) Doelger came to the United States from Germany in the eighteen-eighties and married an Irish boxer named John West. Like good Americans, they settled in working-class Brooklyn, had four children, and became obsessed with show business. A firstborn girl died in infancy; the next, Mary Jane—born in 1893 and known almost from the start as Mae—strongly resented her father, who had wanted her to be a boy. In particular, she recalled that she didn't like his cigars and she didn't like him to touch her. (“Freud wasn't there to explain it to me.”) But Mae worshipped her mother, who worshipped vaudeville, and whose life was soon entirely devoted to making her talented favorite a star.



*West drawn for The New Yorker in 1928, before she was stripped of any power to make it all matter.*

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Mae was on the boards in local theatres a few years after she could walk, playing in “Little Lord Fauntleroy” and as Little Eva in “Uncle Tom's Cabin,” and performing as a “coon shouter” (probably in blackface) between the acts. Distractions like school—and, later, romance—were quickly left behind. Confronted with the girl's rising adolescent emotions, her mother warned her that “I could use them to help me be very famous or I could waste them on the first man,” West explained in an interview in 1934, by which time the first man was a very distant memory. All potential attachments were summarily ended. West would sometimes claim that she'd been broken of the ability to love; or else that she'd prudently chosen to love nobody as she loved herself. It seems true that the only great romance of her life was with her mother. (West did actually marry once, at seventeen, without Tillie's knowledge, as a cover for a possible pregnancy. The couple never even lived together, and she walked off forgetting all about it.) It was from Tillie that Mae learned the all-important lesson that “one man was about the same as another.” And so, “I learned to take 'em for what they were. Stepping stones.” It was to this absolute, unswerving focus that West attributed her success.

Her first big moneymaker came in 1926, when the three-act “Sex” opened at Daly's Sixty-third Street Theatre. In search of theatrical legitimacy, she'd written the play under a pseudonym. Then she rented the theatre, hired the director, and played the leading role: Margy LaMont, a bitter working-class prostitute out to better her lot. No diamonds, no plumes, no multiple entendres. West's awkward script was full of determinedly hard-hitting social truths, and its tone was blatantly angry. “Why, ever since I've been old enough to know about sex, I've looked at men as hunters,” Margy announces. “All the bad that's in me has been put there by men.” She explains, “I began to hate every one of them, hated them, used them for what I could get out of them, and then laughed at them.” In her later years, West hoped that the play would be revived as a masterpiece of sexual honesty before its time, like Ibsen's “Ghosts.”

The review in the *Mirror* bore the headline “MONSTROSITY PLUCKED FROM GARBAGE CAN, DESTINED TO SEWER.” The reviewer moaned that his task should have gone to the Health Department, while another wrote that the audience had been left with “that ‘dark brown’ taste which results from proximity to anything indescribably filthy.” But, thanks to West's raw illustrations of her clearly stated subject, “Sex” sold out for months.

It was while she was having her clothes profitably torn off nightly that West approached an even more sensational subject, in a play she called “The Drag.” Although it was the first show she'd dreamed up without a role for herself, this “homosexual comedy-drama” came closer to West's recognizable, full-blown spirit than anything she'd done so far. She later claimed that she'd been drawn to the subject when her pursuit of an apparent “he-man” met with a less than fully heterosexual response; this astounding experience set her—she said—to reading Freud. In fact, the plot of “The Drag” was pure, hard-boiled sociology culminating in a plea for tolerance—that is, for regarding homosexuality not as a crime but as an illness. West's dramatic finale, however, was a thirty-minute drag ball, largely improvised, in which giddily self-described “queens” and “queers” in gowns and floating boas performed—in a manner even then called “camping”—passable impressions of a Mae West who had not yet quite come into being.

The legal reaction was prompt. West was arrested the night after the new show's unadvertised New York preview. She was prosecuted, however, for her production of “Sex”—still running strong—and eventually spent eight days in the lockup on Welfare Island, well photographed as she arrived and left, and put out mostly by the regulation cotton underwear. Within months, the State Legislature had outlawed any de-

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piction of homosexuality on the New York stage. Yet what West disastrously if inadvertently cost the gay community in terms of open theatrical representation, she repaid during the rest of her career in representations of Mae West. It was from "The Drag" and from its spinoff, entitled "Pleasure Man" (raided and closed in October, 1928), that she added the final, transforming touches of exaggeration and irony—that is, of conscious "camping"—to her mythic self.

The most reliably sober and informative of the recent crop of West studies, Marybeth Hamilton's "When I'm Bad, I'm Better: Mae West, Sex, and American Entertainment," pinpoints West's startling transformation from frank man-hating to easy sexual mockery as occurring during rehearsals of "The Drag" and "Pleasure Man." West was surrounded by a crew of improvising drag queens while she was revising the script of "Diamond Lil." Before the rehearsals, Lil on the page was hostile, angry, badly used. And afterward: there stood the bulletproof, shimmering, vastly amused being whom the critic Parker Tyler once characterized as the reconciliation in a single body of the gay son and his gaily painted, warmly all-forgiving mother.

ONE pauses before the delicate question of where the anger went. "Pleasure Man," despite bouts of hysterical buoyancy, is a bizarrely vengeful melodrama, in which the cruel Don Juan-like hero of the title is castrated by the brother of one of the women he has ruined, and dies of his wounds. In a far happier fashion, "She Done Him Wrong" amounts to a bright, Cinderella version of what remains nevertheless a dream of revenge. "Men's all alike, married or single. It's *their* game. I happen to be smart enough to play it their way. You'll come to it," Lady Lou reassures a young woman who has tried to kill herself after being deserted by a married man. There's a reason that, by her second big picture—"I'm No Angel" (1933)—West's audiences were made up largely of young women. She was teaching the same invaluable lessons she'd learned at her mother's knee: make sure you can afford the dress and the slippers yourself and get the smug little prince to wait his turn in line.

Fittingly, it was from her mother, too, that West finally found the way to give her ambitions shape and meaning. In 1959, she dedicated her autobiography, "Goodness Had Nothing to Do with It," "In loving memory of my MOTHER without whom I might have been somebody else." (Tillie had died in 1930, while West was playing in "Diamond Lil." For the rest her life, West kept with her a photograph of her mother that visitors were surprised to note had been crudely retouched with layers of West's own painstakingly applied cosmetics.) West wrote of her mother as a great beauty, "sexy, but refined," and so shapely that she'd worked as a corset model. But Tillie's allure was a matter of far more than looks. "There was a power and vitality about Mother that made a man melt before her glance." Her husband had called her Champagne Til, and as such she'd been the inspiration for West's omnipotently attractive alter ego, who'd started out as Diamond Til.

Each of the vital components of West's new persona have been well documented. The traditional biographers have always pointed to West's own statements about her mother; the authors of "cultural studies" have examined the elements of drag. But surely the two are intimately connected. The drag-queen touch that went into the creation of Lil was not simply a matter of an appealingly outrageous or novel style. West had been familiar with that style since her early vaudeville days, and she'd known the biggest pros—including Bert Savoy, lauded by Edmund Wilson as "a gigantic red-haired harlot," whose tag line, "You must come over," seems to have stayed with her. Only in 1927 did she finally find the style really useful, when it appeared that the qualities that men brought to playing women gave her what she needed for her awed, adoring characterization of Til: detachment, control, coolness, laughter. One might say, impregnability. The exaggerated profusion of laces and plumes and jewels and the towering picture hats—the period styles of the real Til's own glamorous prime—make a sublimely crazed

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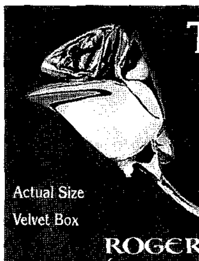

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rendering of femininity that suggests not only a man pretending to be a woman but a little girl pretending to be the most gorgeous grownup woman she's ever seen. Small surprise that the only other female in films who displayed a sense of power as unapologetic and resolute as West's was Shirley Temple, and that the two were paired as box-office favorites throughout their brief, wonderlandish reign.

FIVE of the eight movies West made between 1933 and 1940—the essential span of her career—were set in the Gay Nineties, not otherwise a terribly popular period. This was more than the usual Hollywood custom of repeating a successful formula. By contemporary standards, West was a hefty woman, and it was the period dress that gave her an aura of beauty: carefully draped and shaped by whalebone, she was suddenly curvaceous instead of fat, suggestively contained instead of unintentionally overexposed (which is how she looks in the photographs of "Sex" and her other early shows). Even her non-period films managed to keep her poured into a more or less nineties silhouette. Basically, after 1928 no one ever saw her legs again.

No sooner had she hit the screen than her extravagantly sexual redefinition of what had become a resignedly maternal shape spurred an insurrection among "ordinary" women against post-flapper fashions, so famously free and yet also demanding the straight lines of a near-adolescent female body. In September, 1933, *Vogue* billed a story on West and the corset as "a return to normal" and "a lady's way of saying that the depression is over." Flesh was back. In Paris, "a little pinching . . . and bulging" à la Mae West—that thrilling savage, possibly a blond Negro—was the rage. Colette herself protested vigorously upon the release of "I'm No Angel" that it was "an unforgivable detail, a violation of principle" for Mae West to have lost a little weight.

In her spectacular good health and amplitude and appetite, West seemed to beckon her audience away from all that was modern and angular and neurotic—at times, very nearly away from the decline of civilization itself. "She may not be an answer to Spengler," a reporter for

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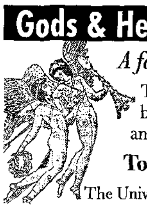

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the *World-Telegram* opined in 1933, but she would do for the moment. Mussolini commended her as a kind of fertility idol (despite her known childlessness) to encourage Italians to have large families. In Vienna in 1934, her films were boycotted after church groups and conservative newspapers protested the fact that citizens of newly de-Socialized "Christian Vienna" were waiting in long lines to see such displays of immorality.

That same year, the gods of Hollywood, also horrified by the immorality of the Mae West pictures that had pulled Paramount back from the edge of bankruptcy and made her the biggest star in the country, agreed to strengthen the infamous Production Code. The code cut sexual references to nil and required that in the end the audience feel that "evil is wrong and good is right." With the slow, sure stranglehold of puritan hypocrisy, it made West safe for an America that had never wanted her that way. "You can't be funny if you have to be clean," she'd said as early as 1933. And she couldn't be—not with the things she had to say. At the very moment that the studio was publicizing her formidable power as a "one-woman production staff"—she wrote scripts and monitored direction and costumes—the censors were stripping her of any power to make it all matter.

"Belle of the Nineties," released in 1934, was based on "The Constant Sinner," a novel she'd written—dictated, actually—in 1930. Reissued last year by Virago Press (along with West's novelization of "She Done Him Wrong"), the book is still surprisingly fresh and harsh. It tells the story of a ruthless whore who climbs her way up through the New York underworld, not in the Gay Nineties but in the rough nineteen-twenties, mostly in Harlem and the ringside boxing world. Cocaine is rife, and one of the book's major themes is the sexual attraction between white women and black men, of which the author, by all accounts, spoke from personal knowledge.

The novel's dénouement is a wicked parody of the racial rape made famous by "The Birth of a Nation." After the golden-haired heroine has enjoyed a long afternoon in bed with her black gangster lover, another of her lovers bursts into the room and shoots him; her husband, who agrees to take the rap, is acquitted for having defended his innocent wife against the violent defilements of "the black gorilla" and for having "upheld the best traditions of the white race, the honour of its womanhood." The book sold well, and West turned it into a play, which hit Broadway in 1931. Ironically, the gangster was played by a white actor in blackface. At every curtain call, he removed his wig with a flourish—a gesture borrowed from female impersonators concluding a vaudeville act—to expose a band of bare white at the hairline and make it clear that no real black flesh had ever come in contact with white.

Needless to say, there was nothing

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left of West's original intentions by the time the movie was made. Period, plot, and characters were all changed, and the race factor disappeared entirely. West played not a modern whore but an eighteen-nineties saloon singer, and the only notable black speaking role went to the maid. Even so, West did win one battle: she got Paramount to hire Duke Ellington and his musicians instead of a studio band. And, via the cinematography of Karl Struss, there is one number that seems to evoke something of the forbidden subject she'd written about. As West stands on a balcony singing the bluesy "Troubled Waters"—"Oh, I'm gonna drown down in those troubled waters, They're creepin' round my soul"—a closeup of her bejewelled platinum-white head as she warbles out her pain and longing is superimposed on a view of a black revival meeting at a campfire, the figures leaping and shouting ecstatically around the flames. This particular scene was cut when the film was shown in England. Enough of the rest of the film was cut before its release in the United States to make the resulting muddle of a story the focus of reviews.

The censorship battle went down to its dirtiest in 1936, when William Randolph Hearst set his empire of newspapers on "Klondike Annie"—the mildest of West's brews, in which her usual irreverent character reforms and becomes a sincere, if somewhat unorthodox, missionary. (The studio had been especially pleased with the result, after scissoring out lines like "You can't save a man's soul if you don't get close to him. It's the personal touch that counts.") But the subject of religion was a lit match. Under such headlines as "THE SCREEN MUST NOT RELAPSE TO LEWDNESS," Mae West was declared uniquely responsible for "the uprising of the churches and the moral elements of the community against the filth in moving pictures." Couldn't Congress do something about her? She was "a menace to the Sacred Institution of the American Family."

She was also at that time the highest-paid woman in America, at \$480,833 a year, and the second-highest-salaried American of either sex, the first being William Randolph Hearst. It isn't hard to speculate that Hearst's role as owner of a rival studio, Cosmopolitan Productions, drove him to his campaign. But West had her own ideas: "No wonder Mr. Hearst

## THE MORNING AFTER

Outside of town the green hills roll
toward little orchards bowed down
in mid-September by their fruit.
I stop the car and cross a wire fence.
The old man hands me a bucket;
I can pick all I can for a buck.
"They're good," he says, "solid, tart,
your wife'll bake all you can eat."

I wonder if the rain last night
woke him coming down in black sheets.
I wonder if that is why he turns
away from me to wipe his eyes
with a ragged sleeve. All around me
the grass sparkles with tiny points
of quartz or lead or glass or maybe
it's only rain transformed into light.

I find the dark-red ones
hidden in clusters of fours and fives,
the hard green apples, brown-stained,
strung out singly along the branches.
When I return he bows to roll
them into a cardboard box and stands,
panting, his eyes closed, while we two
hold on to the same dollar bill.

—Philip Levine

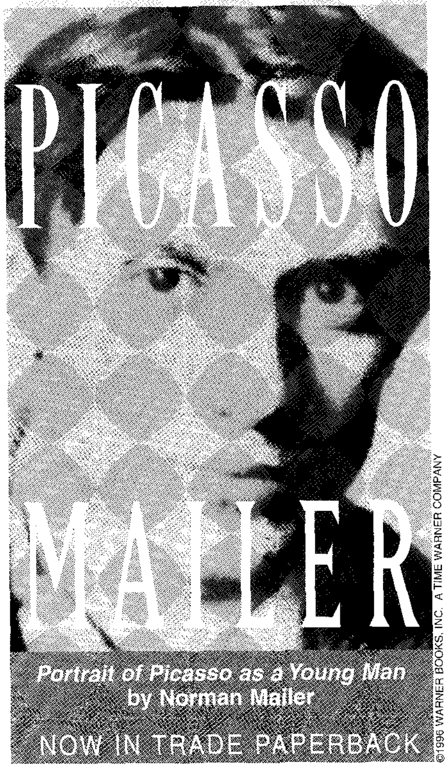
and his high clean living moral values was writing editorials against me," she wrote in her autobiography. "He hated to see a woman in his class."

Paramount's self-defense was complicated by West's tenacious battle against every change in every film: she'd actually smuggled out to theatres a print of "Klondike Annie" that had escaped the studio's final cuts. Still more problematic was the fact that even after a script had been torn apart she could make the barest participle left on a page sound oozily lubricious. All she required was a little bit of unscriptable pressure laid against a word, or a swivel down somewhere in the locomotive axis, or, at most, the famous deep, cooed "Hmmm?" Torpedoed content bubbled right back up in innuendo and undulation. ("A little momentum to remember me by.")

Hopelessly beleaguered, the studio dropped her contract in 1936. But the situation was no easier with the independently produced "Every Day's a Holiday," made in 1938. With Paramount still controlling distribution, she fought the good fight over lines as timid as "I wouldn't even lift my veil for that guy." This was her first movie to lose money. With so little actual material left, not even her near-Kabuki stylizations could get the point across anymore. She was now official box-office poison. In 1939, she made the last major film of her career, the overstuffed and overpraised "My Little Chickadee," in which she played a living effigy of herself opposite W. C. Fields: the two old troupers exchanged dead references and stale quotations where warmth and wit had thrived.

West remained world famous, but as an artifact, a cartoon, an animated shape: in 1940, the R.A.F. named its bulbously inflatable life jacket a Mae West. Watched over by a manager handpicked by her mother, she kept to herself in her white-and-gold Hollywood apartment—Louis XVI by way of an old movie set—closely attended by a newfound spiritual adviser. She had never taken part in the Hollywood social scene, and her circle remained a shifting group of fighters and gamblers and old New York cronies. She'd moved

"HE HAS AN UNCANNY ABILITY TO PLUMB THE PSYCHE OF HIS SUBJECT." —New York Observer



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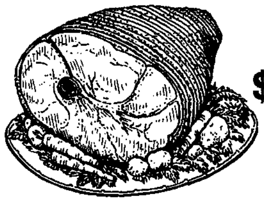

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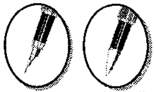

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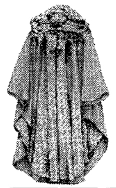

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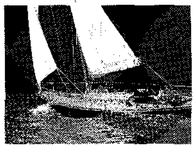

her father out to be with her in California—eventually to the same apartment building—and she took care of an alcoholic younger sister, who'd spent her life not being Mae West. Ever the star, she continued to be photographed on her canopied bed under her famous mirrored ceiling, and what one might call her romantic life apparently went on just as she'd always advertised: a fantasy in which the subject was sex and the turnover was dazzling.

For those who find it hard to believe that a woman could ever really pursue such an existence, several long-term quasi-marital relationships have been put forward: with her manager, James Timony, who handled her business from Tillie's time until his death, in 1954; with the former muscleman Paul Novak, who picked up where Timony left off and stayed on for the rest of her life; and, discreetly, with her chauffeur, the onetime boxer Chalky Wright. But while these relationships may have provided some degree of emotional support, they were not love affairs—or, if they began that way, they didn't remain so for long. Nothing ever did. Whether she herself pronounced this to be a triumph or—occasionally—a tragedy depended on her mood, her audience, and the year.

She made one more film attempt, in 1943—a turkey called "The Heat's On"—and then appeared on Broadway, briefly, in a play that she had written about Catherine the Great, in which she staggered her audience perhaps more than ever by playing the rapacious Empress entirely straight. (She said she'd got all the experience she needed at Paramount.) In 1948, when she was fifty-five, Billy Wilder virtually begged her to play the lead in a new movie that he and Charles Brackett were writing, which would be called "Sunset Boulevard." She refused even to look at an outline. She was incensed at being asked to play a has-been or an older woman: she was at her peak; she could pass for twenty-six. She chose instead to spend four years on the road in another production of "Diamond Lil."

"SHE alone, out of an enormous and dull catalogue of heroines, does not get married at the end of the film, does not die, does not take the road to exile, does not gaze sadly at her declining youth in a silver-framed mirror in the worst possible taste," Colette wrote of Mae West in 1938, "and she alone does not experience the bitterness of the abandoned 'older woman.' " Colette, then sixty-five and a Commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur, had been a "mime artist" in low-rent Paris revues at about the time West was growing out of Little Eva. Into her fifties, Colette had appeared onstage as her own most moving heroine—the courtesan Léa, of "Chéri," who is abandoned by her young lover because of the agonizing encroachments of age upon her beauty. No writer was more expert in depicting the sacrifices a woman makes and rues for *l'amour*.

Colette was also a literary specialist in the long tradition of actresses and female singers and dancers who were able to go it alone—since she thought that only in these métiers had women found both independence and adoration enough to replace the private, humbling needs of women more obscurely employed. (It is this particular class of women whom Simone de Beauvoir—another West devotee—exempts from the amatory afflictions of the second sex.) One of Colette's idols was Bernhardt, who had simulated so well "the feminine suffering to which the theatre had rendered her immune." Another was Mae West, who simulated nothing.

But if West really was neither sad nor bitter as she grew older, the alternatives she presents are not reassuring. What happens to a highly sexual woman past a certain age—at Colette's last view of West, she was a venerable forty-five—who rejects the "sexless dignity" that both de Beauvoir and Colette prescribed as the only way to live on contentedly? (Prescribed for others, it must be said, since both of them subsequently fell into long relationships with much younger men. Even these exceptional women were unable to imagine the actual experiences that were to overtake their bleak theories.) Where in this feminist age are the unashamed counter-examples? Harlow died at twenty-six and Monroe at thirty-six; Garbo went into hiding before she was forty; Goldie Hawn, entering her fifties, plays abandoned wives; and the postmenopausal Germaine Greer preaches that a woman's

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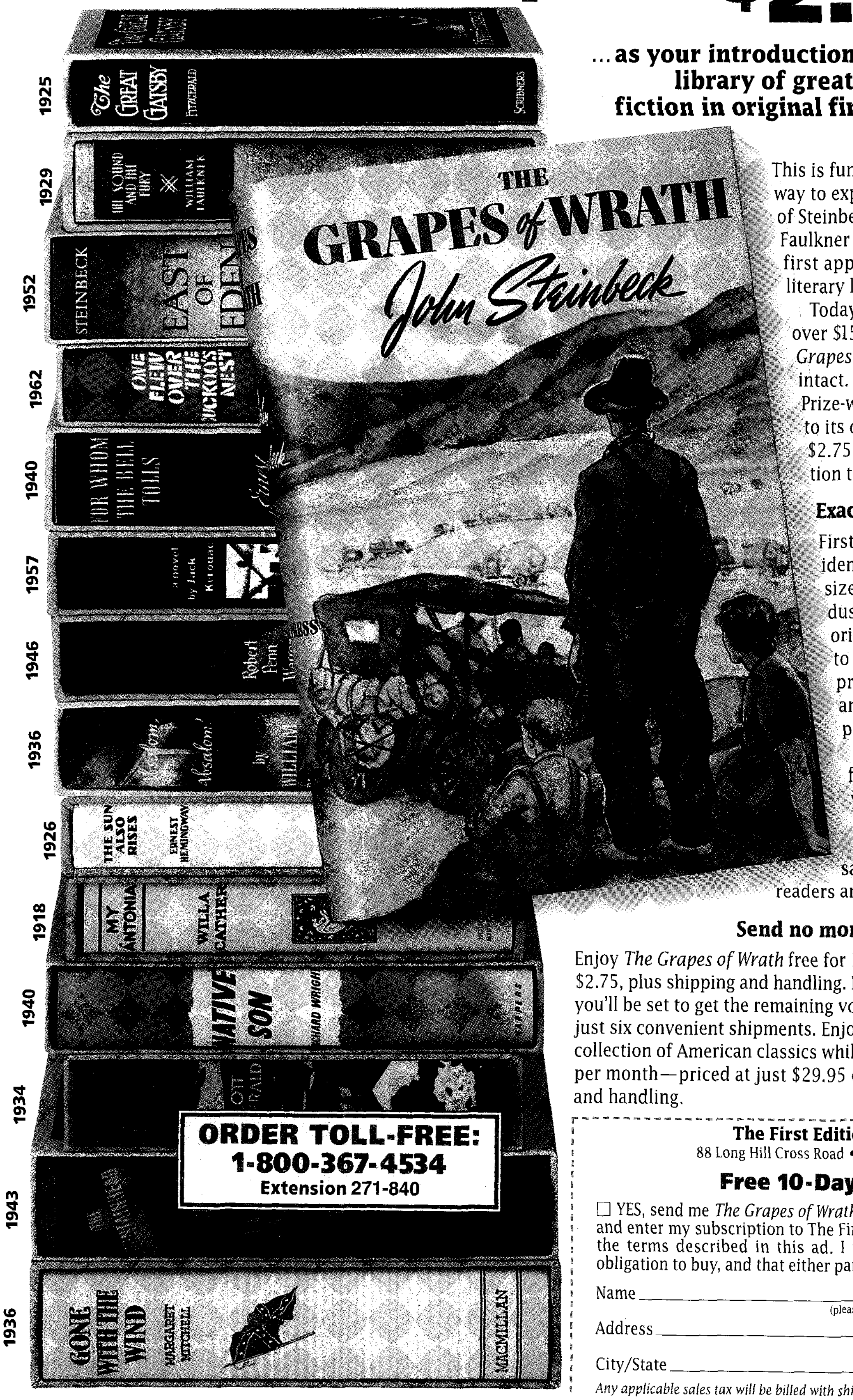
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real sexual liberation is liberation *from* sex, in the life of a crone. Call it bravery or pathetic delusion, or both, only Mae West seems to have had a radically different notion and played it out for all to see. In 1954, at the age of sixty, she set off for Las Vegas.

In the Congo Room of the Sahara Hotel, she was carried onstage by four bruisers dressed in loincloths, and went through her old routines. She was aglow, in her element: she had come not down but back—to the only form of vaudeville that America had left. Reclining upstage on a divan, she assessed the endowments of a musclebound group who paraded on in capes they opened wide when they turned to face her. Sometimes she gave a little glance and kept on buffing her nails; sometimes she gasped; and when Mr. America did his pivot and turn, she got up and winked. She opened with "I Want to Do All Day What I Do All Night" and closed with "Frankie and Johnny." And she was a wild success. She claimed she was doing women a service—offering "the first bare-chest act for lady customers in history"—but women weren't much interested anymore. The semi-pornography was too blatant and too silly. Her most enthusiastic customers were now, more than ever, gay men, and she was unknowingly presiding over the second dawn of camp.

It is important to note that she was no longer fully in on the joke, or in on the biggest joke: her physical transformation and her blindness to it. This qualification distinguished the camp phenomenon that restored a crooked crown to her head in the nineteen-seventies from its larky thirties counterpart, and it could make the renewed sensibility seem uncomfortably cruel. Drag queens, now nearly feminist allies, continued to offer an object lesson in the artificiality of feminine ornament. But gay female idols were no longer the red-hot mamas, like Sophie Tucker, who had led up to West. Instead, they were the tragic, the stricken, the estrogenically doomed. By becoming an old woman—that is, by widening the gap between the mask of femininity and the reality behind it into a chasm that seemed as dizzying as if she were actually male—the strongest

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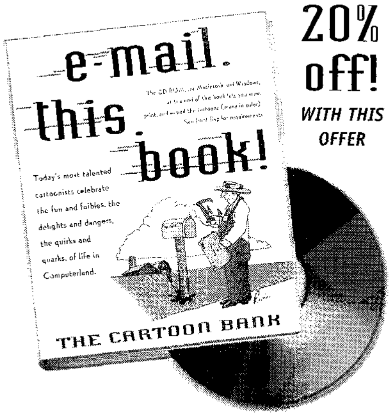
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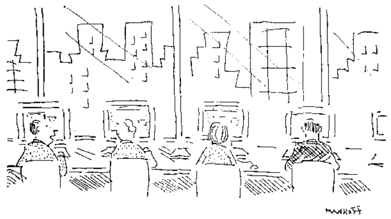

"The e-mail isn't functioning—pass it on."

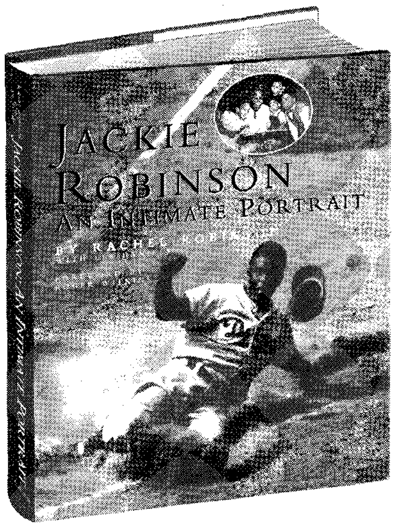
woman ever seen took her place among the new tragicomic goddesses with a dreadful, innocent pride in being applauded again.

"Myra Breckinridge," West's 1970 return to the screen, marked the climax of a comeback that had ranged from a rock LP to a guest appearance on "Mr. Ed." Gore Vidal's transsexual satire was mutilated to a point of toneless X-rated incomprehensibility: Vidal declared it the first time a movie had entirely halted the sales of a book. Unlike the bloody events of West's long-ago moralizing "Pleasure Man," the castration scene this time was self-chosen and surgical: it was only the movie that died. The director, Michael Sarnoff, announced from the start that he envisioned his faded star—West had a supporting role but top billing—as a drag queen. She continued to believe, however, that she was striking a blow for women. When the story had her septuagenarian character put in a hospital after a night with a young stud, West changed the script: "In my version, I put *him* in the hospital. See what I mean?"

It wasn't over yet. Her final film, the all but posthumous "Sextette," concerned the sixth marriage of an ageless sex goddess (who happened to be eighty-three) to a twenty-something future James Bond (Timothy Dalton). Unable by now to remember lines or stage directions, the star had to be programmed from a radio transmitter hidden in her wig. She was tottery and got lost on the set. The film cost nearly eight million dollars and sat on the shelf for a year.

It was eventually shown at a San Francisco theatre in late 1978, on a double bill with Craig Russell's "Outrageous!," a documentary about the artistic evolution of a drag queen—Russell himself, a former teen president of the Mae West Fan Club, who as a mere princess out to learn his trade had gained the star's support, and who paid her ample homage via a supreme Mae West imitation in his film. West's own film got second billing. At the première, which she attended, she refused to speak to him. In a review of "Sextette" for the *Times*, Vincent Canby wrote that West resembled "a plump sheep that's been stood on its hind legs," and

Baseball legend, American hero...



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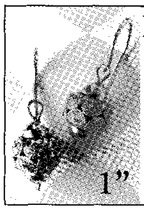

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advised that "Granny should have her mouth washed out with soap, along with her teeth."

"SEXTETTE" made a contribution to American scholarship, if nothing else, by at last committing to celluloid one of West's most famous lines, which had been mysteriously untraceable: "Is that a gun in your pocket or are you just glad to see me?" The shifting identity of the pocketed metaphor during decades when the line floated free through the gender-riven American consciousness has been fully explored by one of the "media scholars" who have been producing a new trove of Westiana from our former English Departments. "In conversation, a number of my female acquaintances have insisted that 'banana' belongs in place of 'gun,'" Ramona Curry, of the University of Illinois, reports in her book "Too Much of a Good Thing: Mae West as Cultural Icon." Another of Professor Curry's acquaintances "recognizes only the 'pickle' version as correct," however, and the advantages of both are indisputable: "The squishy edible, in place of the hard steel weapon, makes the bulging object palatable even as it deprives it of any power to wound."

If Susan Sontag's famed definition of camp as "failed seriousness" continues to serve, then American academic writing has taken over from old movies and old drag queens as our culture's leading camp phenomenon. The attraction of European critics to American arts and myths has always been based on their sense of renewal in encountering the frank, energetic pleasures of a national childhood not their own. Many American academics who currently write about our culture seem to have known nothing except this unending childhood, and so to have only this culture to measure this culture by—and they tend to do so with a seriousness in inverse proportion to that of their subject. The new field of "star studies" depends on the examination of "star texts" with the aid of "fan discourse." Tools of critical analysis are brought to bear on episodes of "Mr. Ed." Of one such episode, Professor Curry notes that the appearance of Mae West "involves the program regulars, especially Mister Ed and Wilbur, in suggestively transgressive gender play," which develops into "hints of bestiality."

The new enthusiasts see West as the ancestress of strong modern women: like Roseanne, but before the public confessions of childhood wounds; and like Madonna, but before the hard body and the baby. Their very changeableness, though, places these later pop icons in a different category. Nothing about Mae West ever changed. Part of that changelessness was being a good vaudevillian: you found what worked and you stuck to it. A lot of it was believing her act and a lot more of it was actually being her act. It may never have been possible to tell the difference. There have always been those who have seen her as a secret victim, operating out of a kind of inverted weakness. Biographers have long speculated on her "lethal insecurity" (Cary Grant said he thought that this was why she used so much makeup) and her use of sex as "the mighty panacea with which she remedied her life." It was without doubt the result of an extraordinary strength, from whatever source, that she managed to leave so little human evidence behind. To have a psychology at all is to court weakness, and so she did without. She made sure that the myth was more real than the woman.

Fully conscious of her role in the battle of the sexes, and deservedly proud, Mae West wrote, in 1959: "I did not perhaps treat the subject as seriously as Havelock Ellis, or as deeply as Sigmund Freud, Adler, Jung or Dr. Kinsey, but I think if we all could have sat down and discussed the subject fully, my ideas would have been listened to with some sense of awe. They may have been the generals, but I was in the front lines—out in an emotional No Man's Land, engaged in dangerous hand-to-hand, lip-to-lip raiding parties." Maybe the best of her valor and the choicest of her victories—for both armies—arose from how much she enjoyed the fight, and insisted on her right to enjoy it and, of course, on our right to enjoy her enjoying it. What it cost her we'll never know. When, in 1980, Mae West had a stroke, a few months before her death, she told the papers she'd fallen out of bed because she'd been dreaming of Burt Reynolds; and it had been worth it. ♦

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A Fling with a Demon Lover, by Kelvin Christopher James (HarperCollins; $22). As this cunning novel opens, Sassela Jack, a stylish and levelheaded grade-school teacher, is enduring an icy winter in Harlem, but soon several twists of fate throw her together with Ciam, a charming (and much younger) Caribbean immigrant, and send the two of them off for a holiday on a sunny Greek island. Luckily, the author is much too original to take this romantic premise in predictable directions: shades of Terry McMillan imperceptibly give way to an atmosphere of encroaching dread, and James's story climaxes with an unforgettable inversion of our received notions of exoticism and black magic.

The Living and the Dead, by Paul Hendrickson (Knopf; $27.50). There are few better guides to the moral complications and intensity of the Vietnam War than this new book—which is payback, in a sense, for Robert McNamara's deeply flawed 1995 memoir, "In Retrospect." Hendrickson, a feature writer for the Washington *Post* and a former seminarian, probes the histories of several men and women whose lives were irreversibly altered by the war: an Army nurse, a Quaker protester who immolated himself outside the Pentagon, a Marine helicopter gunner, and a Vietnamese politician. But the main exhibit here is the life and conscience of Robert McNamara.

Faith and Treason: The Story of the Gunpowder Plot, by Antonia Fraser (Doubleday; $27.95). A small group of Roman Catholics planned to blow up Parliament on its opening day in 1605, when the Protestant King James and his older son would be present, and to proclaim the nine-year-old princess Elizabeth queen, raise her as a Catholic, and so restore Catholicism as the state religion. Like terrorist schemes in our own time, the Gunpowder Plot was both cruel and crackpot, but Fraser does a wonderful job of conveying to the modern reader just why a few Catholics felt that it was justified and also was likely to succeed.

Other Entertainment, by Ned Rorem (Simon & Schuster; $25). Like Virgil Thomson, for whom he worked as a copyist, Rorem is a talented composer of music who writes admirable prose. This wide-ranging collection includes book reviews, recollections, and interviews, each piece a communication enchanting in its directness.

A Feast of Words, by Anna Shapiro (Norton; $23). Each chapter of this charming hybrid—a book that combines cookery with lighthearted literary criticism—links a classic story with a menu: hot currant buns for Frances Hodgson Burnett's "A Little Princess"; a beef tart topped with creamed squash for "Ethan Frome." Even if you have no ambition to cook as creatively as Shapiro clearly does, her analysis of stories from "Stone Soup" (which she sees as an ideal recipe for social welfare) to Alice Munro's "Royal Beatings" (in which a bedside tray of salmon sandwiches becomes an emblem of how both food and love can be bound up with shame) makes delectable reading.

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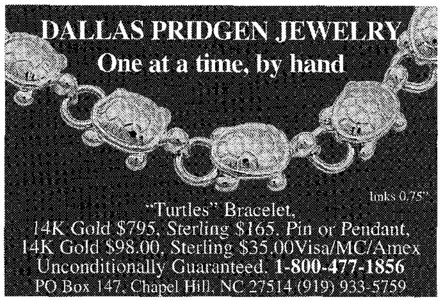

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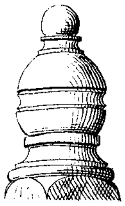

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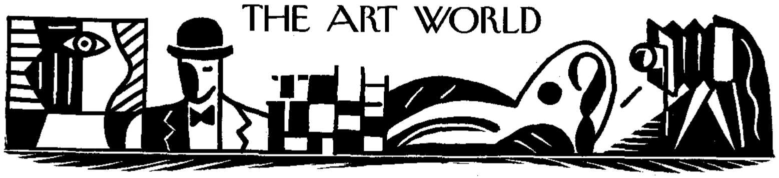


# THE CHANGING PICTURE

*A retrospective reveals Jasper Johns.*

BY CALVIN TOMKINS

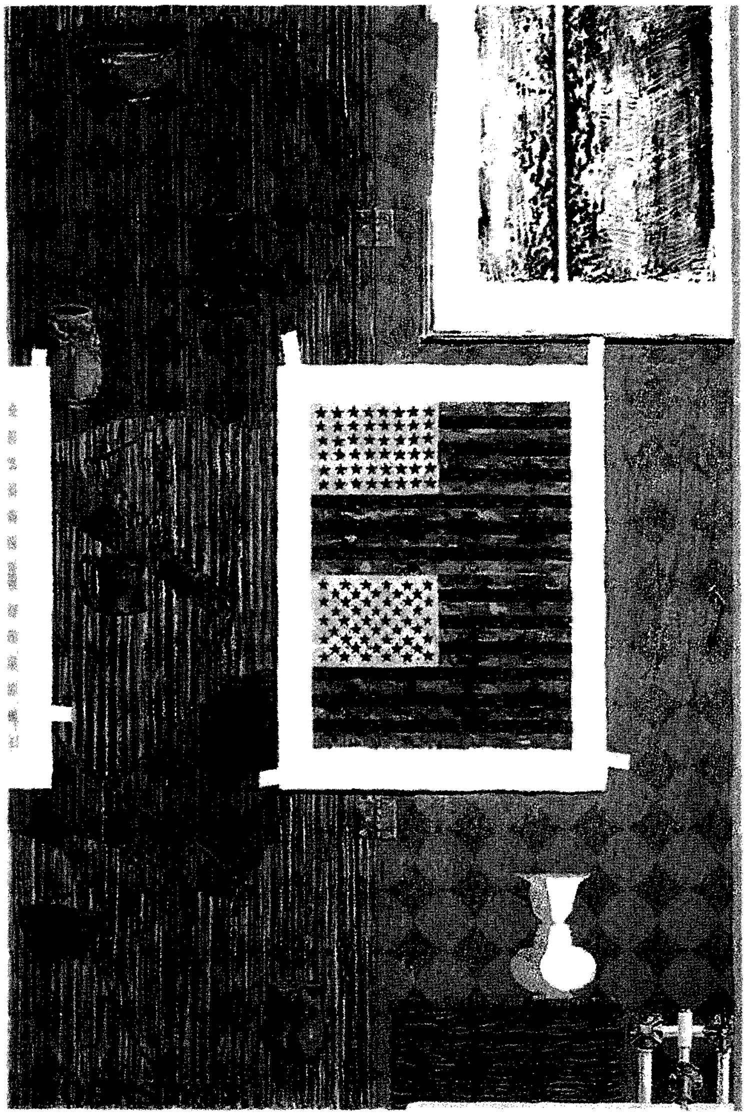
To certain artists, the law of reversible statement pertains: almost anything you say about them can be turned around to show that the opposite is also true. This was the case with Picasso, and it is certainly so with Jasper Johns, who for forty years has frustrated our attempts to reconcile the contradictions in his difficult, hermetic, and yet highly public art. The Johns retrospective now on view at the Museum of Modern Art (through January 21st) is the most comprehensive exhibition of the artist's paintings, sculptures, and graphic work ever assembled, in keeping with his Gibraltar-like reputation as our greatest living artist. One of the show's principal virtues, however, is that it makes no effort to impose a comprehensive, unified-field interpretation of his art. Kirk Varnedoe, the chief curator of MOMA's Department of Painting and Sculpture, has presented a masterly selection of Johns's work in several media, and he has done so in ways that shed new light on previously murky areas, establish useful connections between individual works, and clarify the startling shifts in direction that have given Johns's admirers such trouble over the years. But Johns's art emerges from the exhibition with its contradictions intact. Cerebral asceticism and extreme sensuality, morbid pessimism and punning playfulness, impersonality and self-revelation, literal statement and sibylline enigma—these and all the other seemingly irreconcilable qualities that exist in his work (sometimes within the same picture) retain their distinct outlines and their strange power to jolt us into the uneasy heightened awareness that the work demands.

The Museum of Modern Art has pulled out all the stops this time, scheduling lectures and seminars, mounting a separate exhibition of Johns's prints in the third-floor print galleries, and issuing not one but two massive catalogues, the second of which (it will be out in mid-November) is a three-hundred-page collection of Johns's writings, sketchbook notes, and published and unpublished interviews. Another contradiction: Jasper Johns, famously reticent and fiercely private, turns out to have said a great deal about his work, after all. During the last four decades, in fact, he has made a rather heroic effort to reply conscientiously, courteously, and thoughtfully to just about every question he has been asked—in spite of what one interviewer refers to as "a remoteness that, while very amiable, makes all questions sound vaguely coarse and irrelevant." Some of the more enigmatic replies have been worried over endlessly in the critical literature on Johns; others, less familiar, are amazingly candid. "I try to be straightforward, but I don't know," he said in 1977. "Sometimes I can't think of what to say, and sometimes my mind tends to conjure up the negative of what I am thinking, and I try to see if that's equally valid as what I'm saying." Asked why he has always tended to use "found" images, rather than imagining them himself, he replied, without embarrassment, "I was never well trained as a draftsman. . . . I don't think I ever did it well." (Not the whole story, by any means, but certainly a part of it.) Denying that he worked from preconceived ideas, he went on to explain, "In fact, I often find that having an idea in my head prevents me from doing something else. It can blind me. Working is therefore a way of getting rid of an idea."

The extent to which Johns's verbal statements have dominated and shaped our responses to his work is striking. His first one-man show, at the Leo Castelli Gallery in 1958, electrified the art world with its deadpan paintings of targets, numbers, and the American flag, but reviewers had a terrible time dealing with it: most of them tagged the work "neo-Dada," which it wasn't, and one of them ludicrously described it as catering to "the decadent periphery of bourgeois taste." The next year, however, *Time* printed a statement by Johns about his American-flag painting: "Using this design took care of a great deal for me because I didn't have to design it. So I went on to similar things like the targets—things the mind already knows. That gave me room to work on other levels." And—presto!—the critics were able to move on to other levels themselves.

OVER the years, Johns's work and what he has said about it have nourished a vast amount of critical discourse. Some of this discourse has been brilliant, much of it has been unreadable, but the general level of seriousness has been very high. Johns, by his example, seems to oblige viewers to be more intelligent.

The standard was set in the early sixties by Leo Steinberg, an art historian who has rarely concerned himself since with contemporary art. Steinberg saw in Johns's early paintings "the end of illusion"—a decisive break in a tradition of Western art that extended from Giotto to de Kooning—and he described the feeling he got from Johns's images as "a solitude more intense than anything I had seen in pictures of mere desolation," a sense "of human absence from a man-made environment." In a subsequent essay, Steinberg wrote penetratingly about Johns's use of images that he had not designed himself, and about the fusion of form and content in his work, but he declined to draw any inferences regarding the meaning of the work itself. He memorably concluded, "Johns puts two flinty things in a picture and makes them work against one another so hard that the mind is sparked. Seeing them becomes thinking."


*Johns's "Ventriloquist" (1983).*

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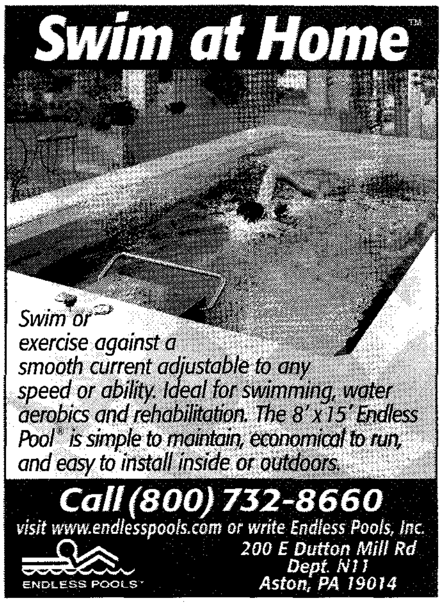
As Johns put more and more flinty and disparate things into his paintings, sculptures, and graphic works of the sixties and seventies, legions of critics valiantly struggled to turn their own seeing into thinking. Johns was not above mocking their efforts with a wicked little sculpture in which, behind eyeglasses embedded in a rectangular block, can be seen a pair of half-open, speaking mouths; its title is "The Critic Sees II." He found some criticism interesting, and even helpful—Steinberg's, for example. Steinberg "tried to deal directly with the work and not put his own map of preconceptions over it," Johns said. "But of course sometimes you wonder about a critic, How could *anyone* possibly think *that*?"

One of the problems for critics was that Johns's work kept changing in radical and unpredictable ways. Having established his name with coldly impersonal renderings of targets, numbers, and flags, he suddenly began to paint in a splashy semi-abstract style that seemed to derive from the work of de Kooning and other artists of the older generation—the Abstract Expressionist generation, whose hegemony had been fatally undermined by the work of Johns and his brilliant friend and fellow-innovator Robert Rauschenberg. Boldly colorful Johns paintings like "False Start" and "Highway" shared the stage in the sixties with dark (mostly gray) pictures whose pervading emotional tone was bleak and morbid, as in "No" and "Liar," or even suicidal, as in "Periscope (Hart Crane)." People started to realize that Johns's work was not so impersonal after all, although any clues it may have harbored regarding Johns's private life at the time were cryptic and contradictory. When Johns literally put himself into his work, rotating his oiled face against a sheet of paper and then dusting the sheet with charcoal, the effect was eerie and unsettling: the "Study for Skin" drawings, you sensed, referred not to Johns but to skin, that fragile envelope between the self and the world.

In the mid-sixties, his paintings grew larger, and more ambitious in their juxtapositions of unrelated elements. Three-dimensional fragments of the human body, which had appeared in boxed segments at the top of two of his early target paintings, reappeared in 1964 in "Watchman," a painting to which he attached a cutoff chair, upside down, holding a wax cast of a man's leg. This strangely disagreeable image came a year after the third (and last) of his "Map" pictures, in which a map of the United States served as a ground for some of the most sensuously painted passages in American art. It was almost as though Johns's painterly touch and seductive feeling for the materials of art had made him wary of falling into the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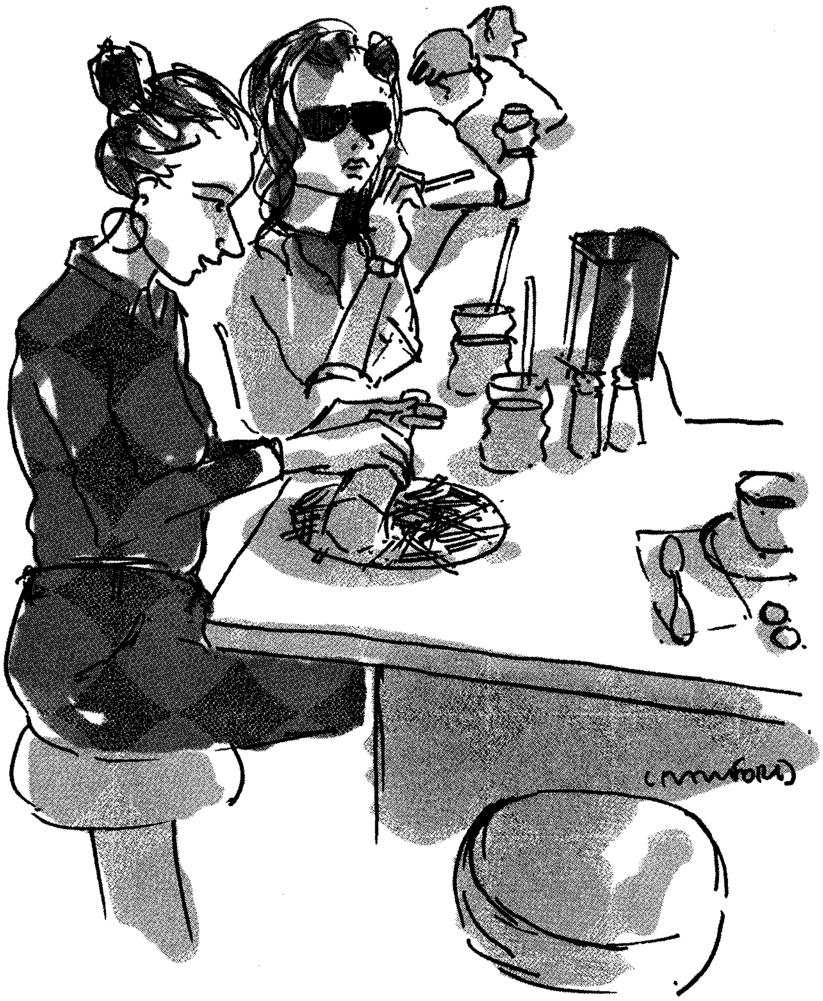
trap of art. He was deeply impressed by the work and the attitude of Marcel Duchamp, whom he occasionally saw in New York, and whose anti-"retinal," idea-based approach to art was so close to his own thinking. When Duchamp died, in 1968, Johns's published comment on him—that he had moved "into a field where language, thought and vision act upon one another"—could have been applied just as well to Johns himself.

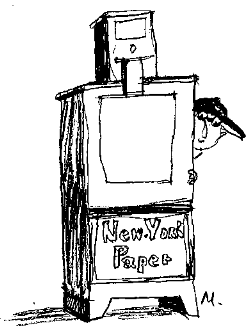
AFTER several years of difficult, image-laden paintings came the shift to pure abstraction. From 1974 to 1982, Johns's dominant motif was a pattern of diagonal hatch marks which he had glimpsed momentarily on a car that passed him on the Long Island Expressway. (Another found image, although he was obliged to re-create it from memory.) Why that particular motif? Johns explained, "It had all the qualities that interest me—literalness, repetitiveness, an obsessive quality, order with dumbness and the possibility of a complete lack of meaning." Recognizable images reappeared in his paintings in the early eighties, and they have been proliferating ever since: images from his earlier work, such as targets, body parts, and "Painted Bronze," his sculpture of a Savarin coffee can filled with paintbrushes; a skull paired with the male genitals in the "Tantric Detail" paintings; the faucets and the spout of a bathtub in Johns's house in Stony Point, New York, a configuration that echoed the eyes and mouth of the skull; ceramic pots by George Ohr, a turn-of-the-century potter whose work Johns collects; trompe-l'œil effects and trick pictures, such as a 1915 drawing by one W. E. Hill, called "My Wife and My Mother-in-Law," which can be seen either as a young woman or as an ugly crone; an increasing number of autobiographical references to Johns's various residences and to his childhood;



*"You've got to meet Marc. Someday he's going to be the answer to a question on 'Jeopardy!'"*

and a profusion of images lifted from works by other artists, among them Leonardo, Piranesi, Munch, Magritte, Cézanne, Holbein, Duchamp, Picasso, Barnett Newman, and Mathis Grünewald.

Most of these borrowings have been readily identifiable, but some have not. Johns took pains to camouflage tracings that he included in several of his pictures of details from Grünewald's sixteenth-century Isenheim Altarpiece, in Colmar, France. Lately, the critical industry that feeds on Johns has concentrated on decoding his references to other art—an academic exercise that incited Johns to retaliate by using, in "Green Angel" and several other recent paintings, an odd-shaped rectangular image that he has refused to identify. Everyone is sure that he took it from somewhere, since he never invents an image himself, but no one has yet figured out the source.



Johns explained just what he had in mind in using Grünewald's imagery. He had gone to see the original in Colmar, and it had impressed him enormously. A friend had subsequently sent him a portfolio of prints showing details of the altarpiece. "Looking at them," Johns said, "I thought how moving it would be to extract the abstract quality of the work, its patterning, from the figurative meaning. So I started making these tracings. Some became illegible in terms of figuration, while in others I could not get rid of the figure. But in all of them I was trying to uncover something else in the work, some other kind of meaning."

Did he succeed in doing so? To this observer, the tracings, whether or not they can be spotted and recognized, carry no emotional weight whatsoever. Johns apparently wants his borrowed images to exert an expressive power that does not depend on our knowledge of the source, and in this, I think, he fails. But I find it significant and quite moving that Johns, who once said that he liked hatch-mark design partly because of its complete lack of meaning, has gone after that "something else" in painting after painting, and never more ambitiously than in the last decade or so. In "The Seasons," a cycle of four paintings done in 1985 and 1986, Johns went as far as to address the ancient themes of decay and renewal, the ages of man, and the artist's need to take stock of his own career, and by doing so he incurred the wrath of certain critics, who would never have imagined him doing any such thing. Johns himself appears in each of the "Seasons" paintings as a full-length cast shadow, featureless and insubstantial, passive yet dominant. The metaphor is evocative, and possibly apt: Johns as a shadowy presence in his own art, surveying the past but not stuck in it, poised to move on to other levels.

The search for "some other kind of meaning" has been a leitmotiv in Johns's art and in his public statements. It throws light on the complex interchange that he sets up between abstract and figurative elements, and on all the other apparent contradictions. From the early numbers and targets to "Mirror's Edge" and other recent canvases, which include such unrelated elements as the floor plan of his grandfather's house, the traced outlines of two fallen soldiers from the Isenheim Altarpiece, and the photographic image of a spiral galaxy, Johns has been searching for a kind of pictorial experience that is different from anything he or anyone else has seen before; and the reaction to his work, over forty years, from the public as well as from the critics, suggests that, more often than not, he has managed to find it. Things don't come together or get resolved in a Johns painting. Harsh and uningratiating surfaces are invaded by passages of incredible beauty, and images that appear simple-minded and "dumb" lie side by side with coded enigmas—finding the connections between them, if any exist, is up to us. The question of meaning remains open. In all the years that I have been looking at Johns's work, I have never come close to understanding it, and I have never not been fascinated by its mysterious, tough-minded integrity.

Johns, as usual, has expressed his underlying ambition better and more simply than anyone else. Asked once what he meant by saying that he wanted "to make something new for people," he replied, "When something is new to us, we treat it as an experience. We feel that our senses are awake and clear. We are alive." ♦

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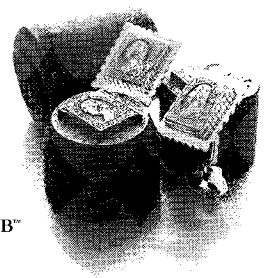

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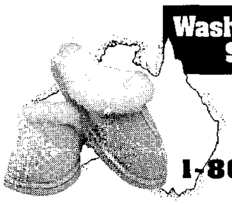

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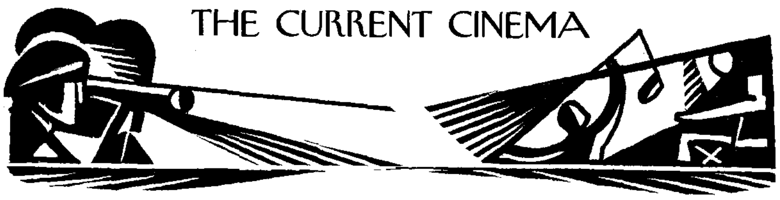


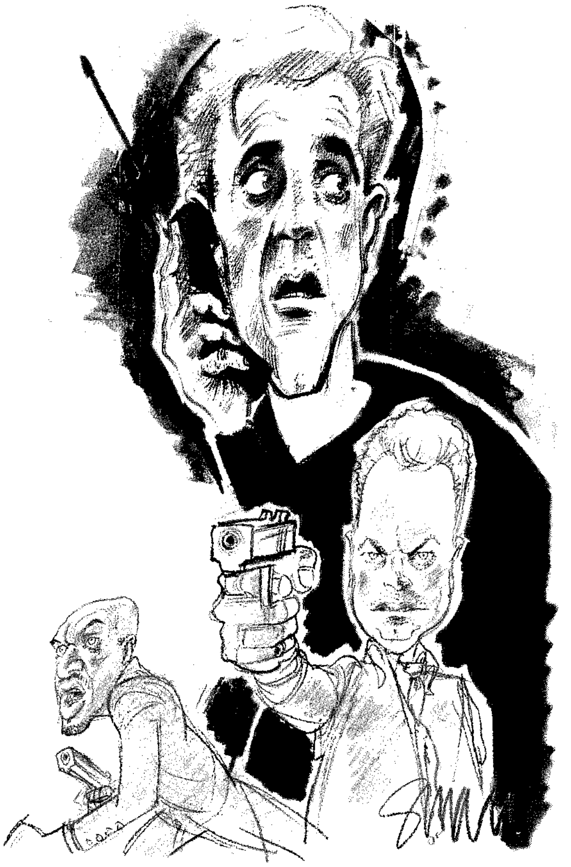
## THE CURRENT CINEMA

# MONEY FOR NOTHING

*Ron Howard's new machismo, and the joys of Jon Lovitz.*

BY ANTHONY LANE

RON HOWARD is tough. He is as hard as the streets that he walks. You may think that anyone who makes "Parenthood" and "Splash" is going to be a pussycat, but, let me tell you, Ron is one mean son of a gun. And if you don't believe me, try "Ransom." Howard's gritty new movie is all grainy and gritty to look at, and it's about a bunch of losers who pull off a gritty crime and pay a heavy, almost gritty price for their sins. Whenever danger threatens, the camera swipes back and forth as if to scour a dirty world. There is a darker, deeper Howard at work here than we have met before, and I was frankly appalled by those frivolous members of the audience who sat around me and giggled. Don't they know true grit when they see it?



*Mel Gibson as an avenging dad in "Ransom," with good cop Delroy Lindo and bad cop Gary Sinise.*

The star of "Ransom" is Mel Gibson, in his first appearance since the Oscar-gobbling "Braveheart." Out with the Highland dreadlocks and the knobbly knees, in with the Armani suit and the roseate glow of cocktail hour on the Upper East Side. Gibson plays Tom Mullen, who began his career as a combat pilot in Vietnam. He now has all that he could possibly want, including his own major airline and a wife, Kate (Rene Russo), who does everything in her power to pretend that she is not in fact taller than he is. They have a son, Sean (Brawley Nolte), who one day has the misfortune to be kidnapped. This comes as a horrible surprise to Tom and Kate, although we in the audience, who may just have noticed the looming shivers in the score and the unshaven lowlifes prowling in the crowd, have the tiniest inkling that something is not right. Why not plant us in the same predicament as the parents'? There's a passage at the start of Ian McEwan's novel "The Child in Time" in which a girl is snatched during a dull day at the supermarket, and the cool recounting of it remains a model of vertiginous, unprepared panic. How much scarier the scene in "Ransom" would have been if Howard, too, instead of briefing us so conscientiously for the coming crime, had swung it in from nowhere—if the child had been plucked right out of the blue.

To be fair, there is one genuine frisson in the picture. It comes when Tom and

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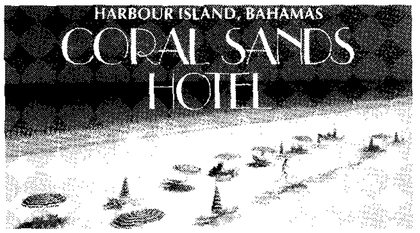

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Kate, who don't yet know what has happened to Sean, receive an E-mail message. It consists of a disguised, wallowing voice and an electronic image of their son lying taped and trussed on a bed. There is a nasty whisper of kiddie porn about this, and the rest of "Ransom," thankfully, feels no need to follow it up. But it's also the only moment that truly catches us off guard: Rene Russo rocks back as if someone had punched her in the stomach, and she takes the whole movie theatre with her. The villains, meanwhile, ask for two million dollars—a suspiciously small sum, almost identical to the amount that Tom spends on socks every year. They also command him not to involve the police or the F.B.I., so without hesitation he brings in the F.B.I.; the F.B.I., in turn, recommends that he pay the money, so, after one abortive attempt at a drop, Tom decides not to pay the money. Anyone see a pattern emerging here? There seems to be an unwritten rule in Hollywood that Mel Gibson is a certified maverick: whether he feels like it or not, he will be the guy who does the wrong thing—or the wacky thing, or the thing that nobody expects.

There is nothing stupid about such typecasting; no one can watch Gibson and fail to see the crackle of unpredictability in his gaze. But it works only if he's having a blast—if that gaze is allowed to alight on something that amuses him or scratches his sense of irony. There were times in the "Lethal Weapon" trilogy when he went a little ape, as the everyday stress of blowing up too many buildings began to get to him, yet we were never encouraged to imagine that his condition might actually be serious. "Ransom," on the other hand, takes itself very seriously indeed, and poor Gibson is called upon at regular intervals to stand and deliver a convincing demonstration of pain. It's a curious sight—all gulps and twitches and clenchings of teeth, as if a very small dentist were hard at work inside his head. Russo, likewise, is given insultingly little to do; the story grinds her down to the status of trophy sufferer. Howard has evidently settled on the idea of a stolid urban drama, which is fair enough, but you shouldn't promise red meat and then give your performers nothing to chew on. I went into the theatre with high hopes; Howard was fresh from "Apollo 13," which was entertainment incarnate, and everything I had heard about "Ransom" suggested an action movie—plain-sailing

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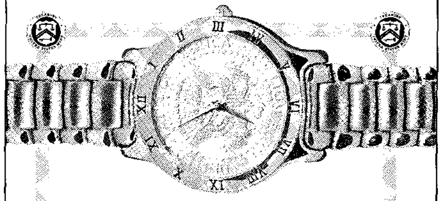
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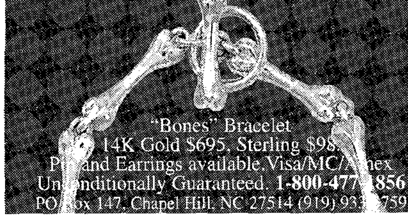
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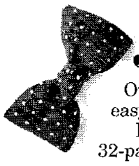
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thrills for all the family. And what do I find? Actors who appear to be rehearsing their expressions for a workshop performance of "Miss Julie," plus a plot that turns up its nose at the sweet smell of excitement. How, in all conscience, can you have an opening scene that pegs your hero as a decorated pilot if your closing scene, two hours later, is *not* going to show him hanging from the flaps of a Stealth bomber? It's just not fair.

The storyline of "Ransom," like its hero, stays at ground level. Tom's cunning plan is to turn the ransom into a bounty—two million dollars, later doubled to four million, for anyone who can lead him to the slimeballs who stole his son. This puts the squeeze on the slimeballs themselves—on Jimmy Shaker (Gary Sinise) and his apostles. Jimmy is a bent cop, and your view of the film will depend largely on whether you believe that Gary Sinise can play a bent anything. This is not strictly his fault; it's just a question of when, if ever, he will get his sea legs back after the traumatizing niceness of "Forrest Gump." His wide and mildly saddened smile was perfect for the disappointed, earthbound spaceman in "Apollo 13," but I'm afraid that the wrath of Jimmy Shaker is not really his style. And it *is* a kind of wrath: Jimmy's desire to beat up the happiness of the Mullens is fired less by cash-flow problems than by a flaring sense of injustice—they are queen bees, and he is one of the drones. "See you at the Whitney," he sneers at Tom over the phone. "See you at the Four Seasons. See you at the Met." For a while, I couldn't quite believe what I was watching here. Revolutionary socialism! Welcome back! The screenplay for "Ransom" is by Richard Price and Alexander Ignon, but it's only in some of Jimmy's resentful threats that you taste the acidity of the Price style. And even that is diluted by moments of dud tenderness, as when Jimmy cuddles up to his partner in crime, Maris (Lili Taylor), and says, "You know what you're really afraid of? Your own humanity. Your own decency." How about "My own dialogue"?

Anyway, everything comes to a head when decent, human Tom meets up with Jimmy, the subspecies, in the middle of Madison Avenue. This is the point at which Ron Howard makes it clear, once and for all, that we should be doing more than enjoying ourselves; not only does he drug the movie into slow motion, he also bleeds it into black-and-white. Is that art, or what? The sole color that remains is the faintest glimmer of red, a signal that our director has not forgotten "Schindler's List." Howard's cameraman is Piotr Sobocinski, who shot "Red"—lots of red there, most of it engorged with feeling—and a couple of the "Dekalog" pictures, for the late Krzysztof Kieślowski. If you ever wanted an illustration of the vagaries of cinematic skill, of how a singular talent can be employed in the service of both the richly contemplative and the outright meretricious, look no further than "Red" and "Ransom." What is most risible about Howard's movie is its penchant for unearned intensity, and what is most depressing is that, as a result, it forfeits the right to be any fun. It also neglects to make much sense: minor characters drop by and take their leave without being introduced, and your urge to get hooked by the narrative—to get kidnapped for kicks, as it were—is forever yielding to an even more pressing need to ask difficult questions. When does Jimmy Shaker, for example, find time to be a policeman? Why doesn't Sean tell his mom about the extremely bad man that he just saw in their apartment? How come the head of the F.B.I. team is wearing the kind of shaggy sweater that suggests an imminent hiking holiday? And did you hear all that cursing? In a Ron Howard film, too. Disgusting!

IS it generally acknowledged just how good Jon Lovitz is? I think he should be celebrated as one of the few contemporary actors who can make us feel that the spirit of Groucho Marx is not dead and buried—that it lingers on, leering and weary, in the crannies of low-grade films. Think of the courageous cynicism that Lovitz displayed in "A League of Their Own," where he was fantastically unimpressed by the mawkishness and high hopes that wailed around him. His new movie, "High School High," demands a little more enthusiasm, even naïveté—Lovitz plays an inspiring teacher named Richard Clark—but there is still something withering in his equanimity. Instead of the lubricious Groucho crouch, Lovitz has a sort of bottom-heavy waddle, like one of those dolls which refuse to fall over however hard you knock them. His mind, I guess, is the same shape.

"High School High" is a David Zucker production, and it therefore lunges hungrily at jokes, whether they belong in the picture or not. I like this sense of surfeit;

the fact that half of the gags don't work is part of the movie's dumb largesse—its conviction that comedy should be unwinnowed and, above all, unbeautiful. The story has Clark quit his job at a private school ("Wellington College, are you white?" asks the woman on the switchboard) to teach history at the rather less exclusive Marion Barry High. The scene that confronts Clark when he arrives looks like something from "The Day After": windows blow out as he approaches, the radio plays rap whatever button he punches, and his parked car vanishes before he's walked five yards. The first half hour of "High School High" is a heavenly vision of hell; there's a raging, Doberman-protected school assembly where the bat-wielding head (Louise Fletcher) holds up a milk carton on which is printed the haunted face of her missing deputy. At her side, three simultaneous translators babble her steely commands.

As far as political correctness goes, this picture is, as you might imagine, somewhere down in the basement with its toes in the trash. On the other hand, the sanctimony of a movie like "Dangerous Minds" was crying out for derision, and what makes "High School High" slightly more forceful than the "Airplane!" or "Naked Gun" series is that it's mucking around with a set of authentic problems. There is a desperate, end-of-civilization air to some of the slapstick—Clark holding up a book and explaining, "They open like *this*," or the career stalls manned by Burger Hut, the Marines, and the Michigan Militia. As so often in Zucker movies—this one is directed by Hart Bochner, not that it matters—the humor loses steam as the plot gathers momentum. Once drug barons entered the equation, I kind of dropped out. If anything holds the ramshackle proceedings together, it's Lovitz. A cursory inspection of his role—the teacher who must urge his moping charges into self-respect—would reveal him to be as sentimental as every other classroom hero, but Lovitz never gives you the chance to complete the inspection, and his appropriation of hood rhetoric for effective math tuition ("They have *six* baseball bats and *two* chains") is wonderfully fast and dry. "High School High" is prickly, anarchic junk, and, if only for Lovitz's sake, it deserved a better title. A friend of mine suggested "Outta My Space, Mistah Chipz." Any other suggestions? Answers on one side of the paper, please. ◆

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Casually drop the fact that you spent a year at a Zen monastery in Hokkaido studying Ai Yi, a twelve-hundred-year-old philosophy—"technique, really"—that induces sustained sexual ecstasy in females. Scoff at "those ridiculous reports" about women dying from Ai Yi-induced heart attacks, but concede that it is not uncommon for them to lose consciousness "after a few hours."

### RULE 2. IT'S BETTER TO DROP NAMES (EVEN IF YOU DON'T KNOW THEM) THAN TO GET DROPPED.

Hang an "autographed" photo of Mel Gibson in your bathroom, inscribed "To the real Braveheart." When she asks you what it means, shrug and say, "Well, you know how Mel exaggerates."

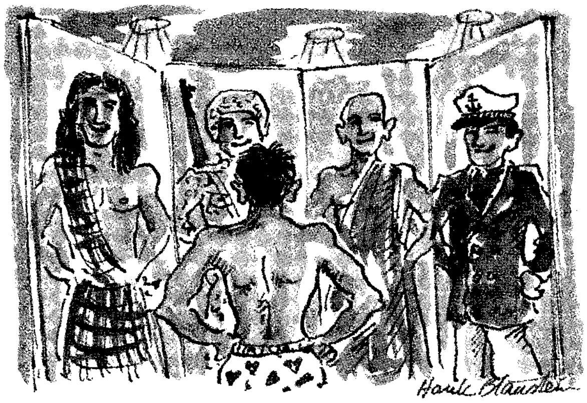
Tell her that if all you cared about was sex with beautiful hardbodies you'd "still be pumping Bain de Soleil with Elle."

"John and Carolyn are really going to like you."

### RULE 3. BE A "REAL" MAN.

Wear a brightly colored rosette in your lapel. Say that it's "just a thank-you from the Queen" for something you did "to help out during the Falklands thing." Add that as an American citizen you are not permitted by the Constitution to "actually use the title," but that when you're over there you "can't help answering to 'Sir.' "

Limp, explaining that you've still got a "touch of frostbite from hauling Sandy Pittman's Park Avenue ass down off that mountain."



### RULE 4. NEVER GIVE HER MORE THAN AN HOUR'S NOTICE FOR A DATE.

Tell her that the recent *fatwa* against you has made your "security situation kind of tricky," and that any kind of advance planning is "simply out of the question." Explain that you "do a little writing on the side under a different name" and that your last article in *Commentary* "got Rafsanjani really cheesed." Be stern: remind her that this is for her own safety as well as yours.

### RULE 5. A COUNTER-RULES MAN DOESN'T THROW MONEY AWAY.

Tell her that you're planning to spend two weeks cruising the Turkish coast on a yacht once owned by the Aga Khan, but that you have "too much respect" for her to invite her on a trip "this early in our relationship."

Call her the day after Valentine's Day and, sounding hurt, ask her why she hasn't acknowledged "the three dozen Venezuelan orchids" you had sent from Caracas. When she replies that she never got any orchids, sound perplexed, then gasp, "I wonder if they were on that flight that went down in the Gulf of Mexico!"

### RULE 6. ALWAYS HAVE AN EXIT STRATEGY.

At the moment of amorous climax, call her by the wrong name. This will get you back to your place in time to catch the "Patton" rerun on Encore. (Note: Use sparingly.)

Carry a beeper preprogrammed to go off at 3 A.M. Pick up the phone, speak angrily in French (high-school French will do, with lots of peremptory "*merde*"s), slam it down, and, as you storm out, declare that this is "the last time" you're "going to pull NATO's nuts out of the fire."

### RULE 7. IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.

When the conversation turns to "commitment," tell her you once witnessed an Amazonian ritual in which a shaman sewed a man's and a woman's tongues together with crocodile gut. Remark, "Now, *that's* commitment." She'll probably change the subject.

When she complains that your apartment could be a habitat for feral pigs, explain that your cleaning lady has been "a bit out of sorts lately," since her entire family was on that flight that went down in the Gulf of Mexico, and that you "just don't have the heart to give her the heave-ho."

If she says she's a Rules Girl and she's not going to sleep with you anymore unless you agree to get married, say O.K., but did she see the "interesting" article in the *Times* on R.D.D.S. (Rules Date Deficit Syndrome)? Explain that it afflicts women who rigorously follow "The Rules" and as a result never get asked out on dates, get married, or have children. In a sombre tone of voice, add that the incidence of "R.D.D.S. bridge jumping" has "reached alarming levels."

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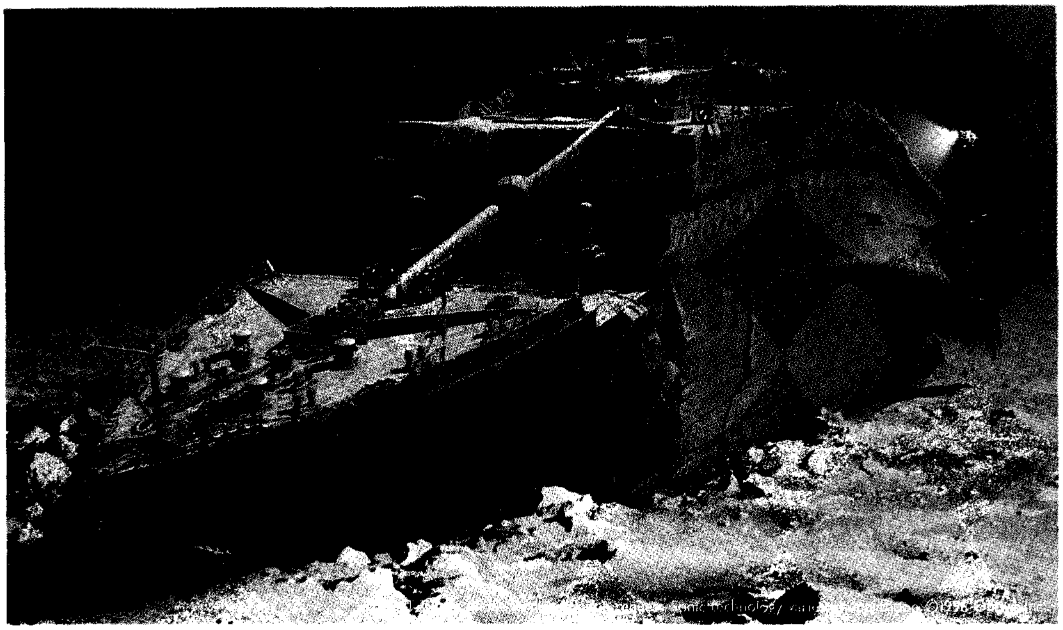

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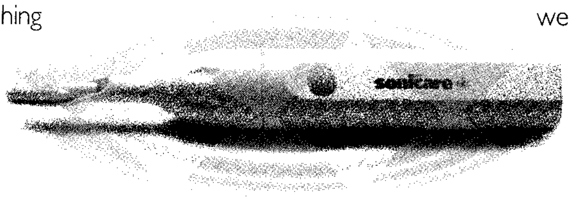

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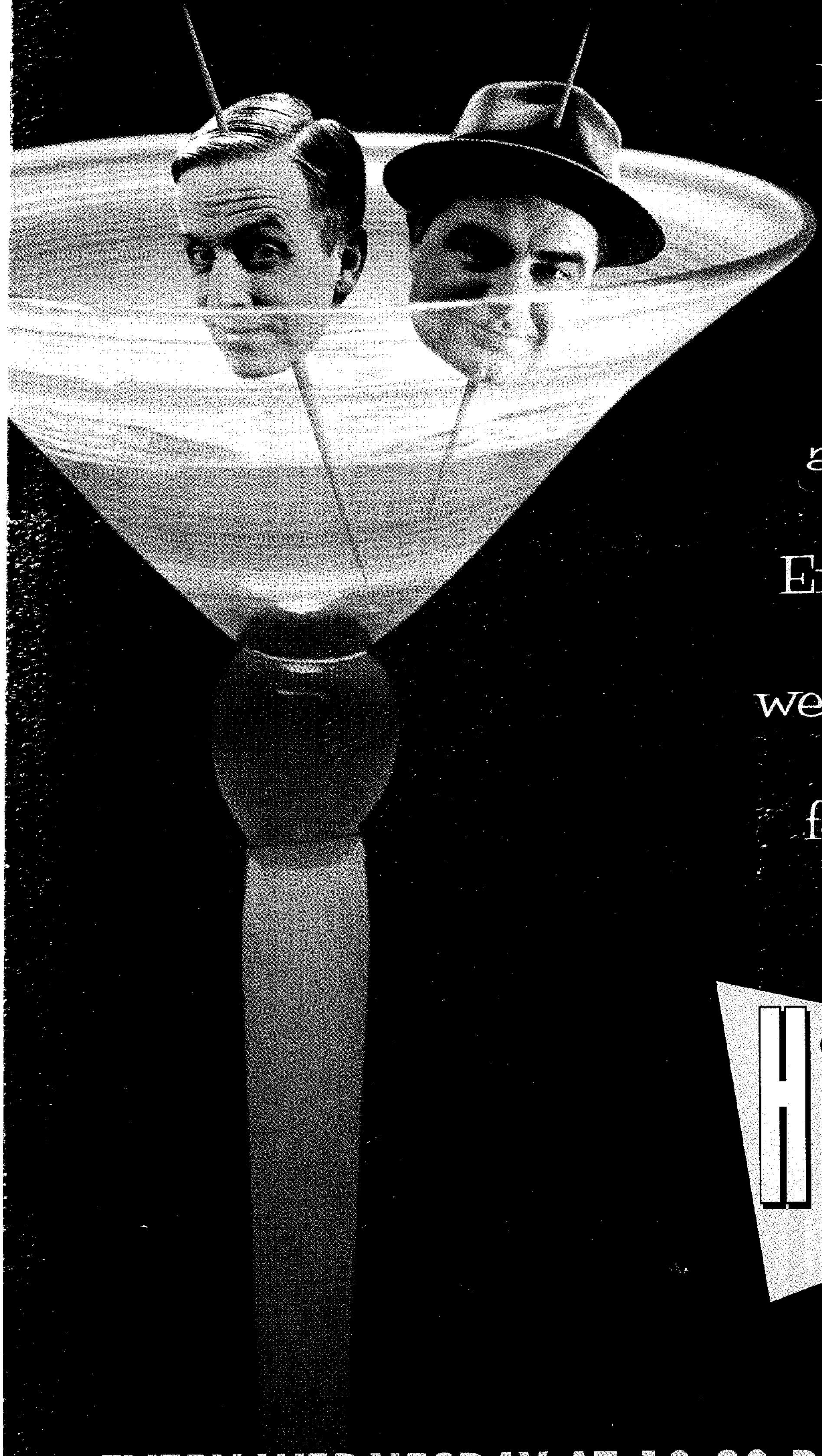

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